

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
CONQUEST of MEXICO,

By the Celebrated
HERNAN CORTES.

CONTAINING
A Faithful and Entertaining Detail of all his
Amazing Victories, in that vast Empire, its
Laws, Customs, Religion, &c.

A Work abounding with Strokes of GENERALSHIP,
and the most refined Maxims of CIVIL POLICY.

To which is added, The
VOYAGE of VASCO de GAMA,
Extracted from OSORIO, Bishop of SYLVES.

Published for the Improvement and Entertainment of
the BRITISH YOUTH of both Sexes.

By W. H. DILWORTH, A. M.

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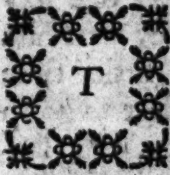
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HE celebrated Hernan Cortes was a native of Medellen, and educated for a military life. His parents intended him to serve under Gonsalvo de Cordoua ; but when ready to embark, he was taken ill of a distemper, by which that opportunity was lost : he afterwards sailed to the West-Indies, in the year 1504, with letters of recommendation to Don Nicholas de Obando, at that time governor of St. Domingo. Notwithstanding the kind reception he met with from that gentleman, he grew tired of inaction ; and understanding the war was still carried on in Cuba, went thither, and acquired the reputation of a valiant soldier and able officer. His person and address were prepossessing, his disposition was amiable, his conversation
B en-

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entertaining, and his generosity unbounded. By means of these accomplishments, he won the heart of Donna Catharina Suarez Pacheco, who was solicited in marriage by the governor Diego Velasquez; and his success so much offended that gentleman, that he caused him to be in confinement, until the affair was adjusted, and then Velasquez stood father to the bride.

In this situation was Hernan Cortes, when his friends recommended him to Velasquez, as a proper person to conduct the enterprize which is the subject of this work; and the governor approving of their choice, a commission was immediately signed, appointing him captain general of the fleet, and of the countries he should subdue.

This was no sooner known than resented by all the competitors, especially by the relations of Velasquez, who did not scruple to censure his conduct openly, in reposing such important trust in a man whom he had once so flagrantly disobliged. It is even reported, that the governor was one day accosted by a waggish lunatick, who said, "Thou hast done well, friend Diego: in a little time there will be occasion for another fleet to go in pursuit of Cortes." In all probability, this farce was dictated by those who envied the fortune of the new general, who being a man of undaunted resolution, and having at last overcome all the perfidious machinations of his enemies, resolved to prosecute his voyage, and adding a brigantine to the fleet, which before consisted of ten vessels from 80 to 100 tun, divided his men into eleven companies, one of which was put on board each vessel; and he named for captains, Juan Velasquez de Leon, Alonzo Hernandez Portocarrero, Francisco de Montejo, Christoval de Olid, Juan de Escalante, Francisco de Morla, Pedro de Alvarado, Francisco Saucedo,

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redo, and Diego de Ordaz, whom he was not willing to disoblige, reserving to himself the command of the Capitana, and entrusting Gines de Nortes with the care of the brigantine. The command of the artillery he bestowed upon Francisco de Orozco, and his chief pilot was Antonio de Alaminos. He then delivered instructions to his officers, and the day of embarkation being arrived, after a solemn mass, he gave the word *St. Peter*, whom he acknowledged as patron of his expedition. Pedro de Alvarado was sent to Guanicanico in quest of Ordaz, with whom he had orders to go and wait for the fleet at Cape St. Antonio; and the rest of the vessels were directed to follow the Capitana; and in case of separation, to rendezvous at the Isle of Cozumel.

They departed from the Havanna on the 10th. of February, with a favourable gale, but at sun-set a furious storm dispersed the fleet. Pedro de Alvarado, who had sailed in quest of Diego de Ordaz, found himself at day-break so far driven into the gulph, that it would be very difficult to weather Cape St. Antonio; he therefore steered away for Cozumel, where they found an Indian Town, whose inhabitants fled at their approach. Alvarado, who was a young officer of greater courage than experience, thought nothing misbecame a soldier so much as inaction, and with this disposition, ordered his men to march farther into the island. At the distance of a league they found another town abandoned. Here the soldiers seized some provision and plundered an idol-temple of its ornamental jewels, and instruments for sacrifice, made of gold mixed with copper. This excursion, far from promoting the service, rendered it impracticable to gain the friendship and assistance of the Indians.

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Next day, Cortes arrived with the fleet at Cozumel, and tho' he was pleased to find Alvarado in safety, he reprimanded him publicly for his rash behaviour, and dismissed three Indians whom he had taken, after having restored their effects, and given them valuable presents for their caciques.

The Spaniards continued three days encamped on the sea-side, where they were mustered: They amounted to five hundred and eight soldiers, one hundred and nine marines and mechanics, besides two chaplains, the licentiate Juan Diaz and Father Bartholome de Olmedo; and this army was strengthened by sixteen horse. The people being assembled, Cortes made a public speech, in which, after having inflamed their courage by the prospect of honour and wealth, he enumerated the dangers they were to encounter, and represented, in the strongest terms, the necessity of acting with unanimity and undaunted resolution.

This harangue was interrupted by the appearance of some Indians, in consequence of which he drew up his men in order, and directed them to stand covered behind their lines. The Indians perceiving no signs of hostility among the Spaniards, approached by little and little, and the boldest of them entering the camp, were so favourably received, that they called to their countrymen, who followed their example, and mingled among the soldiers, with great confidence and familiarity; which argued that they were accustomed to converse with strangers. Indeed there was an idol in this island, very much revered by the Barbarians, who resorted to it in great crowds, from all the different provinces of the continent, which plainly shew that the natives of Cozumel were used to the sight of nations who differed from one another in custom,
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language and dress. Next day, the principal cacique of the island visited Cortes, who received him very politely. During the conversation, one of the Indians was heard to pronounce the word *Castilla*, the meaning of which Cortes was giving to understand was, that the Spaniards resembled certain prisoners in Yucatan, natives of a country called *Castilla*. Hernan immediately concluded the prisoners were his countrymen, whom he forthwith resolved to release; and consulting his guest on this subject, the cacique very candidly told him, they were in the power of some Indians of the highest rank, and that the best method of procuring their liberty, would be to offer a ransom; for, should he have recourse to arms, they would run the risque of being murdered by their masters. He therefore ordered Diego de Ordaz to sail to the coast of Yucatan, with a letter to the prisoners, and some trifles for their ransom, and to stay eight days, within which space the Indians, appointed by the cacique for that purpose, undertook to return with an answer; mean while Cortes marched with his men round the island, in order to view the country, keep his men in action, and display his strength and discipline to the pilgrims. In this circuit he was accompanied by the cacique and a great number of Indians, who supplied him with provisions and exchanged gold for glass beads.

At a little distance from the coast, stood the temple of the idol so much revered by the savages; it was a square stone building of no contemptible architecture, and the idol Cozumel, appeared in the figure of a man of a most horrible aspect. Here was a very great concourse of people, listening to a priest, who seemed to preach with great gravity and emphasis of speech. Cortes,

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shocked at the absurdity of such worship, told the cacique, that in order to maintain the friendship subsisting between them, he must renounce such a diabolical religion, and influence his subjects to follow his example. This declaration he enforced by such arguments in favour of the christian religion, that the chief was confounded, and begged leave to communicate the affair to his priests. These being immediately brought before Cortes, began with hideous outcries to protest again those who should be so audacious as to disturb the worship of their gods, denouncing the immediate vengeance of heaven upon such impious innovators. Cortes immediately ordered his soldiers to demolish the altar, and break all their idols in pieces: a scene that filled the barbarians with astonishment and affright; which however, were succeeded by contempt for their own deities, when they beheld the Christians use them in this manner with impunity. The other temples underwent the same fate, except the chief place of worship, which was converted into a christian chappel; and, next day, mass was said in presence of the cacique and his people, who assisted at the ceremony with great reverence and devotion.

At the end of eight days, Diego de Ordaz arrived from Yucatan, without the prisoners or the Indians, who did not return according to their promise; so that Cortes was highly displeased at the cacique, who, he supposed had deceived him in order to appropriate to himself the presents intended for the ransom. Nevertheless, he would not manifest his resentment, but, taking leave of him with great civility, put to sea, intending to pursue the course which had been followed by Grijalva. Though they set sail with a fair wind, they were obliged that

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that same day to return to the island, in consequence of an accident that happened to the ship commanded by Juan de Escalante, which sprung a leak. This delay, which at first seemed a misfortune, turned out a most lucky incident, as it greatly contributed to the conquest of New Spain; for, just as they were re-embarking, they discovered a canoe crossing the gulph of Yucatan, and standing directly for the island. Cortes, seeing she was full of armed Indians, ordered Andrew de Tapia to lie in ambuscade near the place to which they rowed, and as soon as they landed, to rush between them and the canoe, so as to cut off their retreat. The savages immediately betook themselves to flight, but one among them, crying out with a loud voice in the Castilian tongue, that he was a Christian, Tapia conducted him to the general, attended by the Indians, who were no other than the messengers left by Diego on the coast of Yucatan. He had no covering but just enough to hide his nakedness, and on one shoulder he bore his bow and quiver. Cortes caressed him extremely, and having given order to clothe and regale him, desired to know who he was, and by what accidents he was reduced to such a wretched condition. He said he was called Jerom de Aguilar, a native of Ecija, where he had received deacon's orders: he had been, eight years before this delivrance, shipwrecked upon the flats of the Alacranes, and with twenty other persons, who took to the boat, had reached the shore of Yucatan, where they were taken and carried to a country of Caribee Indians, whose cacique immediately culled out the fattest of them as sacrifices to their idols. As for Aguilar, he was so lean and meagre, that they reserved him for a future banquet; and, that he might be in better case, gorged him with food in a wooden

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age, from which he made his escape. Having wandered several days in the fields, he fell into the hands of certain Indians, by whom he was presented to their cacique. This master he served for some years, during which he acquired such a degree of his favour, that he conferred upon him an employment near his person, and honoured him with his confidence. The cacique, upon his death-bed, recommended him to his son, under whom he possessed the same office; and, in a war with the neighbouring caciques, signalized his valour and conduct in such a manner, that he became a great favourite both of prince and people; so that he obtained his liberty as the recompence of his services.

The Spaniards having gained this valuable acquisition, departed from the island for the second time, on the 4th of March 1519, and doubling the point of Catoche, arrived in the road of Champatan, where Cortes discovered an inclination to land, and chastise the natives for the opposition they had made to Hernando de Cordua and Grijalva; but, this motion being overruled, he pursued his course until he reached the river of Grijalva, where there was no room for deliberation; for, the good treatment which the Spaniards had formerly received from the Indians of Tabasco, and the gold brought from thence, were motives not to be resisted. He therefore made a disposition for entering the river, leaving his larger vessels at anchor without, and embarking his soldiers on board of the smaller and the boats; and, in the order formerly observed by Grijalva, began to stem the current, when he perceived both sides of the river covered with canoes full of armed Indians, supported by several bodies on shore. Guessing that their intent was hostile, he

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he sent Aguilar as interpreter, with offers of peace ; which being rejected with insolence, he resolved to chastise them for their presumption.

Night being at hand, he thought proper to lie by till day, and in the mean time ordered his soldiers to put on their quilted coats, and make all the necessary preparations for an engagement. Day no sooner appeared, than his vessels advanced slowly towards the Indians, who waited their approach with great composure ; and Cortes, still loth to shed the blood of those ignorant savages, sent Aguilar a second time with proposals of amity and peace, to which they made no answer, but rowed down with great expedition until they were near enough to use their arrows, of which they discharged such a number both from the canoes and banks of the river, that the Spaniards were very much embarrassed in their endeavours to cover themselves. Nevertheless they returned it with such success that the canoes quickly left the passage free, and many Indians, intimidated by the death of their companions, flung themselves into the river. The Spanish vessels approached the shore, where the Indians lay in ambush. They renewed the attack with great fury ; notwithstanding which, Cortes made his point good, and having formed his battalion in fight of the enemy, he ordered Alonzo Davila to advance with an hundred soldiers, and take possession of the town of Tabasco, which was not far from the place of action. This officer being detached, Cortes attacked the vast multitude, and though he was obliged to fight up to the knees in mud, he put the savages to flight, and they instantly disappeared, tho' with intention to defend their town, as by this time they had discovered the march of Davila. But, before

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he got up, Cortes reached Tabasco, which was fortified with large trunks of trees fixed in the ground like palisadoes, with interstices for the convenience of shooting arrows. Cortes being joined by Davila, distributed among the men proper instruments for breaking down the palisadoes; then drawing his sword, led them on to the attack. Having received a shower of arrows on their shields, they advanced to the fortification, and quickly drove the enemy backwards, so as to be at liberty to demolish the palisadoes. Then entering without difficulty, they found the Indians formed behind barricadoes in the streets; but they were so embarrassed by their own numbers, that their resistance had little or no effect. They made their last effort in an open space about the center of the town; from whence, however, they were soon repulsed, and fled in great disorder. Cortes would not follow the pursuit, that his men might have time to refresh themselves, and the fugitives an opportunity to sue for peace. In this manner the Spaniards made themselves masters of Tabasco, which was well stored with provisions, tho' the Indians had removed their families and effects. This conquest did not cost the life of one Christian, yet fourteen or fifteen were wounded: whereas the Indians lost a considerable number. The troops were lodged that night in three temples; and tho' next day the country appeared quite deserted, and not the least sign of an enemy appeared, Hernan began to be suspicious of this stillness; and his apprehensions were confirmed, when he understood that Melchior his interpreter had deserted to the barbarians, and doubtless discovered the small number of the Spaniards. He detached, by different routs, Pedro de Alvarado, and Francisco

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cisco de Lugo, each having an hundred men, to view the country, with orders to retire if they should find any army in the field. Francisco de Lugo fell into an ambuscade, and was attacked with such fury, that he was obliged to form his small body into an hollow square, and must certainly have been overpowered by the numbers of the enemy, had not he been sustained by Atharado, who detached an Indian of Cuba to apprize Cortes of his situation. Perceiving the distress of De Lugo, he fell upon the enemy with such resolution, that they fled in the utmost consternation at this unexpected attack. Yet, when they recovered of their surprize, they formed again, in order to obstruct the retreat of the two captains, who were obliged to cut their way through a vast multitude of barbarians, until Cortes appeared marching to the relief of his men; then the Indians dispersed, leaving the field to the Spaniards, eleven of whom were wounded, and of these two died; and this was counted a very considerable loss.

Some prisoners, being examined separately by Jerom de Aguilar, agreed in affirming that all the caciques of the neighbouring countries were summoned to the assistance of the inhabitants of Tabasco, and that next day a very powerful army would take the field. Cortes, calling a council of his captains, communicated what he had learned, and desired their advice, after he had represented the weakness and ignorance of the enemy, and the ill consequence of turning their backs upon the barbarians, who would not fail to report such a disgraceful step, and inspire a contempt of them in that country to which they were going. All the officers agreeing that it was absolutely necessary to slay and subdue these people, Cortes ordered the

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wounded men to be carried on board, the horses to be landed, the artillery to be in readiness against the next morning, which was the feast of the Annunciation. At day-break the men heard mass; then giving the command of the infantry to Diego de Ordaz, he himself and the other commanders mounted on horseback, and marched with the artillery, until arriving at a place called Cinthla, about the distance of a league from their quarters, they descried afar off the Indian army, so numerous and extensive, that the eye could not take it in. As the art of war is almost the same in all the nations of New Spain, we shall now describe the Indian manner of marching and engaging.

Their chief weapons are bows and arrows, the bow-strings being made of sinews of beast, and their arrows headed with bones; they use likewise a kind of javelin, which sometimes they throw, and sometimes manage as a pike, together with long two-handed swords of wood, edged with flints: some of the strongest weild clubs pointed in the same manner, and many sling stones with great force and dexterity. Their defensive arms, which are worn by none but commanders and persons of distinction, consist of quilted cotton coats, ill-fitted breast-plates and shields of wood or tortoise-shell, adorned with plates of metal. The generality of them are naked, their faces and bodies painted in various colours, and their heads adorned with plumes of feathers. Their warlike instruments are pipes of large cane, conch-shells, and drums made of the trunk of a tree hollowed, which being beaten with a stick, yield a very disagreeable sound. Their battalions are formed without any order, they have a body of reserve to answer all emergencies, and they attack with great fury and precipitation, making

ing hideous outcries to terrify their enemies. Not but that they are divided into companies, commanded by their respective officers, who cannot, however, govern them in an engagement, during which they obey nothing but the dictates of rage or horror; in consequence of which they are equally apt to charge and run away.

Such was the army that now poured upon the Spaniards, whom Cortes posted under the shelter of a raising-ground that covered the rear, and placing the artillery to the greatest advantage, he advanced with his fifteen horse into the center of a wood, from whence he meant to sally, and flank the enemy as occasion should require.

The Indians discharged their arms first, and then attacked with such ferocity and expedition, that the Spaniards were obliged to have recourse to their swords, which soon smoked with slaughter; and the enemy pressing on, the artillery destroyed them by whole companies: yet they continued obstinate or rather desperate in their assault, concealing the damage they suffered, and drowning the groans and lamentations of the wounded by dreadful outcries.

Diego de Ordaz acquitted himself as a valiant soldier and judicious captain; but such was the number of the foe, that his men could hardly stand their ground, when Cortes broke through the thickest of their battalions, doing infinite execution with his horse, the very sight of which terrified the Indians, who being frightened by such dreadful monsters, threw down their arms, and fled with precipitation. Diego de Ordaz being sensible of what was acting, advanced with his infantry, and charged this huge body with such resolution, that he soon forced his way to the place which Cortes had cleared of the enemy, who retreated in good order,
making

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making a running fight, till the Spaniards overtook them, and then they fled in the utmost confusion, leaving above eight hundred dead upon the spot. In obtaining this victory over forty thousand Indians, two Spaniards were killed, and seventy wounded; so that the action was truly worthy of the honour which was afterwards done it, by building a church dedicated to the Lady of Victory, a name likewise bestowed on the first town which the Spaniards built in that province.

Next day Cortes ordered two or three Indian officers, who were prisoners, to be brought before him; and perceiving their terror, received them courteously, and set them at liberty, after having presented them with some trifles. This piece of humanity had such an effect, that several Indians came to his quarters, loaded with Indian wheat, fowls, and other provisions, as a present from the principal cacique of Tabasco, who by these ambassadors made proposals of peace; but Jerom de Aguilar observing that these were mean persons, Cortes would not admit them to his presence, but sent them back to their cacique, with a message, importing, that if he desired his friendship, he must send persons of greater account to solicit. The Indian chief, being sensible of his error, sent next day thirty of his principal men, followed by a train of Indians, who carried another present to the christian general. Cortes believing it was necessary to lay aside his natural affability, assumed a grave and severe aspect; and, attended by his officers, gave audience to those ambassadors, who made an apology for the war, and sued for peace with the most earnest entreaties. He explained the cause he had to be displeased at their conduct, and then condescending to grant their request,

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presented them with a few baubles ; so that they returned extremely well satisfied with the issue of their negotiation. Cortes was afterwards visited by the cacique in person, attended by all his officers and relations, and followed by a present of cotton-cloths, plumes, and some pieces of gold, of admirable workmanship. He was received with open arms ; and peace being re-established, he ordered his subjects to return with their families to Tabasco, and obey the Christians in every thing they should command. Next day he returned with a present of Indian women, to serve the Christians in dressing all sorts of victuals : among these was one of extraordinary beauty, who was afterwards baptized by the name of Marina, and proved very serviceable in the conquest of Mexico. It was now that Cortes told the cacique, that he was subject, and officer of a most powerful prince, to whom, if they would become subjects, he would make them happy, and convert them to the christian religion, of which they were at present utterly ignorant. The Indians answered, that they should think themselves happy in obeying so great a monarch : but in the article of religion, they were more reserved.

The pilots now pressed the departure of the fleet, which might be endangered by a longer stay ; and Palm-sunday being the day appointed for embarking, Cortes ordered an altar to be raised, where he intended to celebrate that festival before he should go on board. Mean while the Indians assisted his men in all things with the most officious diligence, and, on Sunday morning, the soldiers marched in procession, with such marks of modesty and devotion, as very deeply affected the Indian spectators, who exclaimed, " This must be a great God,
" to

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“ to whom such valiant men pay so much respect.” Mass being sung, Cortes took leave of his Indian friends ; and next day setting sail, coasted along to the westward, till he came in sight of the province of Guazacoalco, and had a view of the island of sacrifices. Without staying to put in at Rio de Banderas, he continued his course, and on Maunday Thursday arrived at St. Juan de Ulua, where he no sooner came to an anchor, than he saw two large canoes, called piraguas, coming towards the ships, with Indians in them, from the neighbouring coast : when they were within a small distance of the admiral, they began to speak in a language which Aguilar did not understand, a very disagreeable circumstance to Cortes, who foresaw that the want of an enterpreter would be a great obstacle to the success of his enterprize. The Indian woman, whom we shall henceforth stile Donna Marina, guessing his concern, told Aguilar, that those people spoke the Mexican language, and desired audience of the general, on the part of the governor of that province ; and Cortes desired them to come on board and deliver their message. This woman, who was daughter of a cacique, had been carried away in her youth, to a place upon the confines of Yucatan, kept by a Mexican garrison, where she learned the language of that people, and afterwards, by the fate of war, became slave to the cacique of Tabasco, who presented her to Cortes ; and he confirmed her in his interest, by making her his concubine. She was a person of rare endowments, in a little time learned the Castilian tongue, and bore a son to the conqueror of Mexico, called Don Martin Cortes. He was created a knight of St. Jago, in consideration of the nobility of his mother. This lady, tho’ not yet acquainted

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acquainted with the language of Spain, interpreted to Aguilar, in the Yucatan tongue, what the Mexicans said, and he imparted it to Cortes in the Castilian. By this means, they gave him to understand, that Pilpatoe governor, and Teutile captain-general of that province for Motezuma, sent them to learn his intention, and to offer what assistance he should want for the prosecution of his voyage. Cortes having presented them with a few baubles, told them, he came as a friend, and would meet the two governors, from whom he hoped to receive the same civility some of his nation had experienced the preceding year.

Next morning, being Good-Friday, the Spaniards landed with their horses and artillery. Cortes ordered the soldiers to cut fascines and fortify their camp, within which was built a sufficient number of huts or barracks, to shelter them from the excessive heat of the sun; and by the assistance of a body of Indians sent by Teutile, they were in a little time all under cover. They likewise brought plenty of provisions, and some cotton cloths to cover the barracks in which the officers lodged. This civility on the part of Teutile was greatly owing to the terror created among the Indians by the success of the Spaniards at Tabasco.

Cortes, notwithstanding his friendly intercourse with the natives, still kept himself upon his guard, and nothing extraordinary happened till Easter-day, when he was visited by Teutile and Pilpatoe, attended by a very great retinue. The first compliments being past, he conducted them to a great barrack, that served as a chapel, where mass was celebrated with all possible solemnity, to the astonishment of the Indians, which indeed had all the air of devotion. After the worship, they returned to the

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the general's quarters, where they were entertained with great plenty and ostentation : then Cortes told them, that his errand was to treat with the emperor Motezuma, on the part of Don Carlos of Austria, monarch of the east, touching affairs of great importance : for which reason it was necessary that he (Cortes) should appear before his royal presence, to which he hoped he should be admitted, with all the civility and respect due to the greatness of the king whose minister he was.

His guests changed countenance, and, before they returned an answer, ordered their Indians to bring in a present of provisions, fine cloths, feathers of various colours, and a great box containing divers pieces of gold curiously wrought : and, turning to Cortes, Teutile begged he would accept that small present from two slaves of Motezuma, who had orders to entertain such strangers as should come upon the coast : but he desired he would not think of prosecuting his design. Cortes replied, with some warmth, that ministers ought not to take upon themselves to advise in such cases ; that their business was to inform Motezuma of his arrival, and his determined resolution to see him : for he would never leave the country with dishonour to the king whom he represented.

The Indian chiefs earnestly entreated him to continue in his quarters till the return of a messenger from Motezuma, and in the mean time they would supply him with all things necessary for his soldiers. During this conference, some Mexican painters were employed in drawing upon cotton cloths, the ships, soldiers, arms, horses and artillery, by way of information to Motezuma : for this was the only method they had of transmitting ideas without the help of speech. To render their description more in-

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intelligible, they placed here and there certain characters that seemed to explain the picture: and in this manner they preserved the remembrance of antiquities, and handed down to posterity the annals of their kings.

Cortes observing that those still images wanted action, ordered his men to be exercised, and the artillery loaded, while he and his captains mounting their horses, began to skirmish in a martial manner, to the amazement of the Indians, who seeing such fierce animals so obedient to their riders, thought there was something supernatural in those who could manage them with so much ease and dexterity; but when first the small arms were fired, and then the artillery discharged, they were so confounded and dismayed at the noise, the fire and the smoke, that some fell down upon the ground, others fled in the utmost fear, and those who stay'd were fixed to the spot with terror and admiration. Cortes immediately dissipated their apprehension, assuring them that these were only diversions from which they would receive no injury: upon which the painters began to represent the Spaniards drawn up, the horses in the attitude of their exercise, and the artillery spewing forth fire and smoke. Hernan re-conducted the two governors to his barrack, where he gave them some small Spanish jewels, and a present for Motezuma, consisting of several polished mirrors, an holland shirt, a cap of crimson velvet, adorned with a gold medal, and a tapestry chair.

Teutile and Pilpatoe, well pleased with this instance of Spanish magnificence, took their leave; and, retiring, held a consultation, in which it was agreed, that Pilpatoe should remain in that place to observe the actions of the strangers; and immediately

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mediately his men began to build barracks. That this step might not give umbrage, he sent to inform Cortes, that his reason for staying there was, that he might be at hand to supply his troops with provisions. Tho' Hernan guessed their real intention, he connived at their dissimulation from which he drew such advantages; for, the fear of being detected rendered them more punctual in furnishing him with all necessaries. As for Teutile, he proceeded to his own quarters, whence he dispatched messengers to Motezuma, with an account of what had happened, the pictures that were drawn by his order, and the present of Cortes, desiring further orders with all expedition.

Motezuma's reply was brought by Teutile to Cortes, together with a valuable present, which loaded the shoulders of an hundred Indians, consisting of very fine cotton robes, a quantity of plumes made of feathers, so artificially disposed as to represent natural figures, a great number of bows, arrows, and targets, a large plate of embossed gold representing the sun, another of silver representing the moon, and a considerable store of precious stones. These articles being displayed in order, Teutile told Hernan by the interpreters, that the great emperor Motezuma had sent him these things as a token of his regard for his monarch; but that it was not possible for him, at that time, to admit him to his court. This refusal Teutile endeavoured to soften, by representing the badness of the roads, and the savage nature of the Indians, who would not fail to take up arms to obstruct his march. Hernan received the present with marks of great respect, but answered in a resolute tone, that how loth soever he might be to disoblige Motezuma, he could not dishonour his king so much,

as to return without having fulfilled his orders; and therefore he was obliged to insist upon being admitted to an audience. He then dismissed them with another present, and promised to wait a certain time in that place for Motezuma's second answer to his demand; and assuring them he should be very much concerned at being obliged to advance farther without his permission. He ordered Francisco de Montejo to cruize for ten days, with two vessels, along the coast, to take a view of the towns, to search for some harbour in which the fleet might be better sheltered from the north winds than in its present riding, and to look out for a piece of ground where the men could be more comfortably lodged than in their first quarters, which, being on a sandy soil, exposed them to the reflected heat of the sun, and the stinging of the mosquitoes or gnats.

This perseverance of Cortes incensed Motezuma to such a degree, that he proposed to destroy at once those insolent strangers, who presumed to dispute his will; but when his passion subsided, he changed his resolution. He held private councils with his ministers and relations, public sacrifices were made in the temples, and he discovered such marks of disturbance and confusion, that the people began to talk of the approaching ruin of the empire, and of the signs and presages by which it had been foreknown.

Mexico was then in the zenith of its glory, it comprehended all the known provinces and countries in North America, extending above five hundred leagues from east to west, and two hundred from north to south, the whole empire being populous, rich and fertile. This empire, from a very small beginning, had risen to such a pitch of power and greatness, in the space of one hundred
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and thirty years ; during which the Mexicans had subdued all their neighbours. They were first governed by a military chief, but, at length they chose a king, who was a person of the most distinguished valour. At first, justice was the rule of their conduct, but, as their power increased they degenerated into tyranny and oppression.

Motezuma, the eleventh king of Mexico, was of the blood royal, and in his youth signalized himself in the war, so as to acquire the reputation of a valiant captain, which inspired him with the ambition of ascending the throne ; accordingly, when he returned to court, and tho' naturally of a surly disposition, he exerted the arts of popularity with such success, that, when the throne became vacant, he was unanimously elected sovereign. Then he laid aside his affability, altered the regulations of the court, compelled the nobles to serve him in the most menial offices, and inspired the people with such terror and awe, that they durst not look up in his presence. His tyranny and pride produced many rebellions ; but none of the revolting provinces could withstand the power of his arms, except Michoakan, Tlascala, and Tebeaca. When Cortes arrived on his coast he had reigned fourteen years, the last of which he passed in great anxiety : for, immediately after Juan de Grijalva's expedition, he was terrified with terrible portents and prodigies. A dreadful comet appeared in the night, and the people imagined they heard lamentable voices in the air foretelling the end of the monarchy. Nevertheless these signs and portents made very deep impressions on the mind of Motezuma, and dismayed his counsellors to such a degree, that when the second message arrived from Cortes, they concluded

cluded themselves undone, and were utterly distracted in their opinions. Some proposed that the strangers should be treated as enemies to their gods and to their country; others were of opinion that the Spaniards ought to be received with reverence and respect, as creatures of an higher species, who had already given such fatal proofs of amazing courage, and invincible power. Motezuma resolved to follow a middle course, by sending another present to Cortes, with a message, commanding him to leave the coast; and in case of his refusal, to raise a powerful army, and act against him with his whole power.

Francisco de Montejo, whom Cortes had sent to view the coast, returning from his cruize, having found, at a distance of some leagues to the northward, a town called Quiabissau, situated in a fertile soil, well cultivated, near a large bay, where the ships could ride in safety, Hernan began to think of removing his quarters to that place, when his resolution was suspended by the arrival of Teutile and his captains, who came with their little perfuming pans, burning gum-copal; and having produced Motezuma's second present, consisting of the same particulars that constituted the first; together with four green stones like emeralds, to be presented to the king of Spain, as jewels of inestimable value, they insisted upon Corte's departure and his followers without delay; and the Spaniard still insisting upon seeing their monarch in person, Teutile started up with marks of anger and confusion, and told him, that hitherto Motezuma had treated him as a guest, but that it would be his own fault if he should find himself used as an enemy. He then turned his back, without waiting for an answer, and went

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went hastily away. Cortes, in consequence of his abrupt departure, ordered the guards to be doubled; and next day found a considerable alteration, which did not fail to disturb his men; for, the Indians that used to supply them with provision were entirely gone. The apprehension of want produced dissatisfaction among the soldiers, who insinuated, that Cortes ambitiously pursued a rash design, which would undoubtedly end in the destruction of them all, unless he returned to Cuba, to resist the fleet, and reinforce the army. Cortes was not ignorant of their murmurs, but learned from his friends that the majority was on his side.

He shewed himself to the malcontents, in whose name Diego de Ordaz, with some warmth and disrespect remonstrated, that, as their force was by no means proportioned to the design of subduing a mighty empire, it was now high time to return to Cuba, where they might be reinforced by Diego de Velasquez, whose province it was to take proper measures for the success of such an enterprize.

Hernan, tho' extremely provoked at the insolence of this address, replied with great composure, that those who complained must be weary of good fortune; inasmuch as they had hitherto met with an uninterrupted series of success; witness, their prosperity at Cozumel, and their victory at Tabasco: but as he had no inclination to put the least constraint upon his soldiers, he would immediately prepare for their return to Cuba. After this declaration, which silenced Diego de Ordaz and his party, he actually published his intended return, and ordered the captains to embark with their respective companies, that

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that they might be ready to sail next morning ; but his emissaries, according to the direction they had received, began to exert their eloquence among the soldiers ; observing, that they had been deceived by Hernan Cortes, who, instead of making a settlement in that country, was now on the point of deserting it : they therefore suggested, that if he chose to abandon the enterprize, he might retire with his own friends, and they would soon find another gentleman who would assume the command. These insinuations were so artfully diffused, and the clamour increased to such a degree, that some of Hernan's friends were obliged to interpose, in order to appease the disturbance they themselves had raised. They commended the spirit of the men, and led them directly to Cortes, telling him that the soldiers were ready to mutiny, on account of the order he had given for re-embarkation ; which they supposed was contrary to the advice of the other captains, and altogether unworthy of Spanish courage. Cortes, overjoyed at the success of his expedient, answered, that he had been misinformed by some of those who were principally concerned in the success of the undertaking ; but as he intended to return only to please the soldiers, he would now stay with much more satisfaction, since he found them so well disposed for the service of their king and country : yet far from restraining those who did not chuse to stay, he would immediately provide vessels for transporting them to Cuba. This reply was received with acclamation and applause ; and those who were dissatisfied, either wholly laid aside, or concealed their discontent.

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At this period Cortes was visited by five deputies from the cacique of Zempoalla, with proffers of friendship and alliance, which Hernan the more willingly embraced, as it arrived at a time when he was abandoned by the Mexicans; and his satisfaction was still the greater, when he understood that the cacique being oppressed by the tyranny of Motezuma, he might convert his friendship to his own advantage, so as to facilitate his future success. He therefore dismissed the deputies with presents, and professions of friendship, to the cacique, whom he promised to visit in his route to Quiabisslan.

In the mean time having laid the plan of a corporation, to be established on this continent, Alonzo Hernandez Portocarrero, and Francisco de Montejo, were appointed alcaldes; Alonzo Davila, Pedro and Alonzo de Alvarado, and Gonzalo de Sandoval, were constituted regidores; the chief alguazil, and procurator general, were Juan de Escalante and Francisco Alvarez Chico. These appointed a clerk of the council, with other inferior officers; and having taken the accustomed oath, they began to exercise their functions, and distinguished their new settlement by the name of Villa-rica de la Vera Cruz, a title which it preserved in the place where it was afterwards fixed, for as yet the corporation was ambulatory.

The intention of Cortes, when he established this commonnity, was to divest himself of that uneasy dependence upon Velasquez, which he hitherto sustained; and therefore on the very next morning, after their institution, the council being assembled, Cortes desired admittance, and having paid his respects to the magistracy; observed, that

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it would be necessary to give a sanction to the authority of that command, upon which all their hopes depended. He frankly owned, that he had no other title than that which he derived from Velasquez, and as they knew he no longer obeyed his principal, he would not pretend to conceal the defect in his constitution, but was resolved to resign his command into their hands; that, as representatives of his majesty, they might freely proceed to the election of a leader: and, as he had nothing at heart so much as the success of the undertaking, he could, with perfect resignation, take up a soldier's pike with that hand which laid down the staff of a general. So saying, he laid his commission upon the table, kissed the truncheon, and delivering it to the alcaldes, retired to his barrack, in the capacity of a private man. The council, as the affair had been preconcerted, unanimously admitted of his resignation, but at the same time voted that he should be appointed general of the army, with a new commission, to be in the force until they should know his majesty's pleasure. The people were made acquainted with the resignation of Cortes, and the resolution of the council; at which they expressed uncommon joy, and immediately proceeded to Hernan's quarters, giving him to understand, that the town of Villa-rica had, in the name of Don Carlos, and with the consent and approbation of the inhabitants, in full council, chosen and appointed him general of the army in New Spain; and, if necessary, did require and command him to exercise the functions of that station, for the public good, and his majesty's service.

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Hernan accepted this command with great respect, and now began to rule with inward satisfaction and security. But the friends of Velasquez resented this alteration in a very indiscreet manner; and Cortes finding more moderate expedients ineffectual, extinguished it at once, by a step that argued his uncommon fortitude and penetration. He ordered Diego de Ordaz, Pedro Escudero, and Juan Velasquez de Leon to be publicly seized, carried on board the ships, and put in irons; and perceiving that their imprisonment struck a terror into the troops, he declared he would proceed against them even unto death, as perturbators of the public peace. He continued in this affectation of severity some days, during which he suffered no person to visit the prisoners; but afterwards their friends were admitted to their conversation, and among the rest some of his confidants, who found means to reduce them to reason: so that by this resolute conduct he effectually conciliated their affections; and in the sequel they stood by him with unshaken fidelity and friendship.

Cortes, having made the proper dispositions, ordered the ships to sail for the bay of Quiabitslan, whither he resolved to march by land; and, setting out accordingly, he, in a few hours, reached the river of Zempoalla, which the soldiers passed in canoes, the horses being obliged to swim: then the army arrived at some houses in this district, which they found entirely abandoned and unfurnished, tho' the natives had left in their temples several idols, and instruments edged with flint, together with the miserable remains of human victims, which at once moved horror and compassion.

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The Spaniards passing the night in these empty houses, next day continued their march along the most beaten road that turned to the westward, leading farther from the shore. They saw not one person the whole morning, until entering some delightful meadows, they were met by twelve Indians, loaded with hens and bread, as a present to Cortes from the cacique of Zempoalla, who invited him to his town, where he had provided quarters for the Christians. Six of these Indians being dismissed, with an acknowledgment for the hospitality of their chief, Cortes detained the rest as guides to the town, which was at the distance of a day's journey. That night they halted in a small village, where they were kindly entertained by the inhabitants; and in the morning they marched forward for Zempoalla; tho' their motions were performed with all imaginable caution, as Cortes still doubted the sincerity of the Indians. In the evening they approached the town, from which twenty Indians came forth to receive Cortes, with an apology from their cacique, who was kept at home by a natural infirmity. This was a large city, affording a beautiful prospect, situated between two rivers, and the houses built of stone. The squares and street were filled with innumerable crouds, drawn together by curiosity; and when the Spaniards entered, the cacique appeared at the gate of his palace, supported by some of his nobles; for he was so monstrously fat, that he could neither stand nor move. He was covered with a mantle of fine cotton, adorned with various jewels; when he was brought forwards to salute Cortes, his appearance was so unweildy and ridiculous, that the Spaniards could hardly maintain that

gravity which is the characteristic of their nation. However, having welcomed his valiant guest with well turned compliments of respect, he desired Cortes to repose himself after his journey, and he would visit him in his lodgings, where they could converse more at leisure about their mutual interest. The troops immediately retired to their quarters, where they found plenty of provision and all necessaries: then the cacique sent a present to the general, to the value of 2000 pesos; and afterwards came in person with a splendid retinue, carried in a chair, on the shoulders of the chief of his family. Cortes went forth to receive him, attended by his captains; and retiring to a private apartment with him and the interpreters, expatiated upon the grandeur of the Spanish king, whose ambassador he was; and told him, the design of his coming was to redress wrongs, punish violence, and espouse the cause of justice and reason. He artfully touched this string, in order to wake the Indian's resentment against Motezuma, that he might gradually discover what advantages could be reaped from his indignation: and indeed the words were no sooner pronounced, than the cacique changed colour: he began to sigh like one afraid of disclosing his affliction; but, his resentment prevailing over every other consideration, he broke forth into bitter lamentations; importing, that he and all the neighbouring caciques groaned under the tyranny of Motezuma, whose power was irresistible. Hernan gave him to understand, that, in a righteous cause, the Spaniards would little regard the power of Motezuma; but at present he was on his march to Quiabistan; and, in the mean time, he might assure his friends and confederates, that he would willingly undertake their defence. This was the subject of their conversation;

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versation; after which the cacique took his leave, extremely well satisfied; nor was Cortes less pleased at the prospect of such a powerful alliance, which would strengthen his interest in the prosecution of his scheme.

When the army was ready to march, they found four hundred Indians of burthen, called tamenes, provided by the cacique, as porters to carry the baggage and provisions. The country was pleasant and fertile, partly covered with trees and partly cultivated in corn fields. They halted all night at a little village that was deserted; and next morning they arrived at Quiabitslan. They did not perceive any person in the place, until, coming to a square, fifteen Indians handsomely dressed came out with their perfuming pans, making abundance of abject cringes, and marks of submission. Cortes ordered them to be civilly treated, and presented with some glass beads; so that, recovering their spirits, they informed him that the cacique had withdraw himself in order to avoid a war; and that the inhabitants followed his example: as for themselves, they had staid to know the intention of the strangers; and now they were convinced of their honourable inclinations, they would communicate the news to the fugitives, who would return to their houses, and serve them with all fidelity and obedience: accordingly, some families came back that very night, and in a little time the town was filled with its inhabitants. In a few days the cacique himself returned, and was introduced by the cacique of Zempoalla, who made an handsome excuse for his friend; and the conversation turning upon the despotism of Metozuma, against whom he of Quiabitslan inveighed with great bitterness; their discourse was interrupted by

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the entrance of three Indians, who having whispered something in a seeming fright, the two caciques changed colour, and hastily retired with marks of terror and confusion: their disorder was owing to the arrival of six commissaries of Motezuma, who passed the quarters of the Spaniards in great pomp, attended by a number of servants, or inferior officers, who cooled them with fans made of feathers. Cortes went to the gate to see them, while they proceeded with such insolent and contemptuous looks, that the soldiers were provoked, and would have chastised them on the spot, had not they been restrained by the general, who contented himself with sending Donna Marina, to know the cause of their coming. By these means he understood, that they had summoned the caciques to appear before them; and, reprimanding them sharply for entertaining strangers who were enemies to their king, they demanded, over and above the ordinary tribute, twenty Indians to be sacrificed to the gods, as an atonement for the crime they had committed.

Cortes ordered some soldiers to bring the caciques to his presence, when, telling them that he knew the inhuman purpose of the commissaries, he commanded them to seize the Mexicans, and leave the rest to his conduct and discretion. At first they absolutely refused to comply, until Cortes repeating his order with a resolute tone, they executed his command upon the ministers of Motezuma, whom they confined by the necks in a kind of wooden pillory, to the infinite satisfaction of the people, who demanded that they might either die the death of traitors, or be sacrificed to the gods without delay. Cortes, however, would not grant their request, tho' he secured them with a guard

guard of Spanish soldiers, and retired to his quarters, to contrive some method for extricating himself from the difficulty in which he was involved. He was equally unwilling to come to an open rupture with Motezuma, or disoblige the party he had formed against that prince; therefore he resolved to do something of which he could make a merit with the Mexican emperor, without giving the caciques any reason to think him cold or remiss in their interest. In consequence of this resolution, he sent privately for two of the prisoners, and having treated them with great kindness, told them they were now at liberty, and as they had received their freedom solely from him, they might assure their prince, he would endeavour to release the rest of their companions; for he was desirous of peace, and of deserving that civility from Motezuma, which was due to the ambassador of such a mighty prince. The Mexicans heard this declaration with equal astonishment and pleasure; but as they durst not set out on their journey for fear of being molested by the populace, they were conducted by a guard of Spanish soldiers beyond the district of Zempoalla. In the morning the caciques came to Cortes, very much troubled at the escape of the two prisoners, and he received the news with signs of great concern, blaming their want of care and vigilance: but to prevent such an accident for the future, he said, he would take care to guard the rest, whom he forthwith ordered to be carried on board the fleet, where they were kindly entertained. Thus, without losing the confidence of the caciques, he conferred an obligation upon Motezuma, whose power was so great, that he did not chuse wantonly to provoke his resentment.

The moderation and beneficence of the Spaniards towards their allies was so quickly divulged among all the neighbouring districts, that in a few days, Cortes was visited at Quiabistan by above thirty caciques of the mountain in sight, on which were numerous settlements of a rustic people called Totonaques, who made their submission, and offered to assist him with an incredible number of armed Indians against the tyranny of Motezuma.

This confederacy being formed, those chiefs retired to their respective places of habitation. Hernan Cortes resolved to settle the corporation of Villarica de la Vera Cruz, which hitherto had moved with the army: for this purpose he pitched upon a plain, between Quiabistan and the sea, of a fertile soil, well watered, and abounding with timber, proper for the purposes of building. They began, by laying the foundation of a church, and the Spaniards being assisted by the industry and skill of their Indian friends, the houses were soon reared, and the town encompassed with a round wall, sufficient to defend it against all methods of attack used in that country.

Motezuma being informed of the disobedience of the cacique of Zempoalla, resolved to assemble his forces, not only to chastise this rebellious tributary, but also to go in person against the Spaniards, whom he destined as a sacrifice to his gods: but this enterprize was prevented by the arrival of the two Indians whom Cortes had released. These having given an account of their imprisonment, and of the courteous treatment and message they had received from the Spanish general, Motezuma's anger was appeased, and he determined to have recourse again to the expedient of negotiation, and try to divert Cortes from his design, by a new embassy and present.

The settlement and fortress of Vera Cruz was almost perfected when this embassy was brought, by two nephews of the emperor : their retinue was very splendid ; the present, consisting of gold, feathers and cotton, was worth two thousand pieces of eight ; and the message delivered to Cortes was to this effect : That Motezuma, being informed of the insolence of the two caciques, resolved to come in person with a powerful army to chastise them ; but, as he was unwilling to break with the Spaniards, he requested them to leave the territories of his rebellious chiefs, that they might run no risque of sharing their punishment ; desiring, at the same time, that the general would set the rest of his officers at liberty, and desist from his design of coming to Mexico ; because the dangers and impediments attending such a journey were unarmountable. Cortes received the embassy and presents with great respect ; and, having delivered the four imprisoned officers to the ambassadors, observed that he was highly pleased with such an opportunity of shewing his regard to the emperor ; that, tho' he could not help owing the insolence of the caciques, he thought it in some measure excusable, from the insolence of the officers themselves, who had, of their own authority, demanded twenty Indians for their sacrifices ; a proposal of such diabolical cruelty, as could not but be shocking to the Spaniards, who were bred in another religion, of greater piety and regard to human nature ; that finding himself obliged to the caciques, for entertaining him in their territories, after he was abandoned by Teutile and Pilpatoe, he could not help interceeding with Motezuma in their behalf, especially as they, together with the Totanaque mountaineers, were now in a special manner

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manner under his protection : that when he should be so happy as to appear in the emporor's presence, he would communicate the importance of his embassy ; and, in the mean time, he would pay no regard to impediments and dangers, which served only to whet the resolution of the Spaniards, who were accustomed to seek glory amidst the greatest difficulties.

Soon after this occurrence, the cacique of Zempoalla, coming to Vera Cruz, told Cortes that now the time was come for his defending their country from the Mexicans, some troops of whom had arrived at Zempazingo, a strong place, at the distance of two days journey, from whence they already made excursions into his district. Hernan, thinking it was incumbent upon him to protect his new allies, and necessary to strike a terror into Motezuma's army, desired the cacique to provide Indians of burthen for the baggage and artillery ; and, beginning his march immediately, at the head of four hundred Spaniards, he passed by Zempoalla, where he was joined by two thousand armed Indians ; that night he quartered his troops in some houses within three leagues of Zempazingo, and next day he discovered the town, situated among steep rocks, which rendered the access very difficult. Nevertheless, his men overcame the steepness of the road, without having met with any resistance ; and he was preparing to attack the place in several parts, when he was prevented by a deputation from the town, of eight ancient priests, clothed in black mantles, gathered and plaited about the neck, with a hood that kept the head warm. These venerable ambassadors, whose faces and hands were stained with the blood of human sacrifices, approached the general ; and, in a suppliant tone, asked by what offence

fence the poor inhabitants had merited the indignation of a people so famed for clemency and goodness. Cortes answered, that he only came to chastise the Mexican soldiers quartered in the town, who had infested the territories of his friends. The priests replied, that the Mexican troops had retired farther up into the country, when they heard that Motezuma's officers were imprisoned at Quiabiskan, and that he was misled by the false suggestions of the Zempoallans, who had feigned this story to make him the instrument of their revenge. Cortes soon discovered the truth of this allegation, by the confusion of the Zempoallan officers; and being nettled at the deceit, he sent for the Indians, and they being brought into his presence loaded with booty, and followed by the wretched inhabitants, crying aloud for justice, he ordered them to unbind their captives, and restore the goods; and publicly told the Zempoallan captains, that they had incurred the penalty of death in engaging him by deceit as a party in their revenge. However, he suffered himself to be appeased by the intercession of his own officers, whom he had before hand instructed for that purpose; tho' in truth he durst not venture to proceed rigorously, for fear of losing the friendship of his new allies. He then commanded the Zempoallans to lodge without the town, while he himself entering with his Spaniards, was received as a deliverer, and visited by the cacique, accompanied by others of the neighbourhood, who voluntarily acknowledged themselves subjects of the king of Spain. He next adjusted the differences between these Indians and the Zempoallans, and having made them friends, returned to Vera Cruz, leaving his interest and reputation highly advanced by this expedition.

In his return, he found the cacique of Zempoalla waiting for him, at some distance from his town, with great store of provision for the army; and perceiving that chief was ashamed of his conduct, by the confusion of his speech and countenance, he assured him he had laid aside his displeasure; and they went into the town, where the cacique had provided a present of eight virgins curiously adorned, among whom was his own niece, whom he recommended as a wife to Cortes. The general thanked him kindly for this proof of his sincerity and affection, but told him it was not lawful for a Spaniard to marry any woman who differed from him in point of religion. About this time the Zempoallans were assembled on one of their most solemn festivals, to celebrate a sacrifice of human blood, which being performed with horrible ceremonies, the victims were cut in pieces, and sold to the people as sacred food. Cortes, who was informed of this transaction, forgetting every other motive, instantly commanded the soldiers to bring before him the cacique, and principal Indians; with these he proceeded to the temple, followed by his troops; and the priests came running to the gate, calling with loud and hideous outcries, the people to defend their gods. Some troops of armed Indians immediately posted themselves in the avenues of the temple; and Hernan Cortes ordered Donna Marina to tell them aloud, that on the first arrow they should let fly, he would cause the throats of the cacique, and all the principal Indians who were in his power to be cut. The cacique commanded them instantly to lay down their arms and retire; and they obeying, Cortes began to declaim against the barbarous absurdity of their religion, till, being gradually wrought up to a degree of

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enthusiasm, he proposed that they should immediately ascend the steps, and overthrow the idols with their own hands: and when they declared with tears and lamentations, that they would suffer all extremities of torture rather than commit such impious sacrilege, he ordered the soldiers to perform the task, and in a twinkling the idols were flung down and broken to pieces. The Indians stood motionless, expecting to see the immediate vengeance of heaven; but, finding their gods unable to defend themselves, their superstition was changed into contempt, and they themselves assisted the Spaniards in burning the fragments of their deities. The walls were immediately cleansed, and the temple converted into a Christian church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

The Spaniards, returning to Vera Cruz, were reinforced with ten soldiers and two horses, brought thither from Cuba: and this small addition was at that time reckoned a considerable supply. By this reinforcement the general learned, that Velasquez had obtained the title of king's lieutenant of the island, with a power to make new discoveries and settlements; that this new honour had augmented his pride and rancour against Cortes, whom he resolved to persecute with all his might. This information determined Hernan to lay his proceedings before the king; accordingly the council of Vera Cruz wrote a letter, containing an account of the expedition, and a detail of the injurious behaviour of Velasquez towards Hernan Cortes, to whom they besought his majesty to grant the commission of captain-general, that he might act for the service of his country, without any dependance upon the governor of Cuba. Nor did Cortes himself omit explaining the foundation of the hope he entertained

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of reducing the Mexican empire to the obedience of his majesty; and the disposition he was making to contend with Motezuma, by the help of his own revolted subjects. These dispatches were committed to the care of Alonzo Hernandez Portocarrero, and Francisco Montejo, who embarked for Spain on the 16th of July, 1519, and carrying as an offering to his majesty all the gold, jewels and curiosities they had acquired, together with some Indians, and a particular present from Hernan to his father Martin Cortes.

During this period some of the soldiers and sailors privately concerted means for escaping to Cuba, with intelligence to Velasquez, who might send out cruizers to make prize of the ship: they had made sure of a vessel and laid in provisions for the voyage; when one of the conspirators went and revealed the whole scheme to Cortes, who took his measures with such discretion, that all the accomplices were seized on board of the vessel, and forthwith confessed the crime of which they were accused. Two soldiers, the ringleaders of the conspiracy, were condemned to die, other two were whipped as old offenders, the principal mariner, for the ship was sentenced to lose one of his feet, and the rest were pardoned.

This conspiracy gave great uneasiness to Cortes, who considered it as the consequence of past disturbances, and the spark of a flame which might prove very mischievous in the prosecution of his scheme: he was agitated by various uneasy reflections, and after revolving a number of different expedients, he formed a resolution which evinced the greatness of his soul. This was to destroy the ships, that the soldiers might act with more ardour and unanimity, and enable him to conquer or die. He communicated this scheme to his confidants, who,

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exerted themselves among the men in such a manner, that the sailors themselves unanimously declared the ships would founder, in consequence of the damage they had sustained; so that Cortes seemed to act according to their own dictates, when he ordered them to bring ashore the sails and other necessary things, and to sink all the great vessels, reserving only the boats for fishing. By this destruction of the fleet, he gained a reinforcement to his army, of above an hundred men.

Having performed this action, he with his officers concerted measures for pursuing the expedition: he left one hundred and fifty men with two horses in garrison at Vera Cruz, under the command of Juan de Escalante; and, assembling his whole force at Zempoalla, mustered five hundred foot, fifteen horse, with six pieces of cannon. The cacique had provided two hundred tamenes and a considerable number of armed troops, out of which Hernan picked four hundred men, including forty or fifty noble Indians, whom he carried as hostages for the security of the Spaniards at Vera Cruz, and his own page, whom he left with the cacique to learn the Mexican language. All things prepared for the march, an express arrived from Juan de Escalante, with advice that some ships were seen hovering on the coast; Cortes went immediately to Vera Cruz, leaving the command of the troops to Pedro de Alvarado and Gonzalo de Sandoval. At his arrival, he perceived one of the vessels at anchor at a considerable distance from the land, and on the shore were four Spaniards, consisting of an escrivano and witnesses, who delivered to Cortes a notification signifying, that Francisco de Garay, governor of Jamaica, had, by virtue of an order from the king, embarked on board of three ships, two hundred

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hundred and seventy Spaniards, under the command of Alonzo de Pineda, and taken possession of that land on the side of the river of Panuo, and therefore he required Cortes not to make any settlements that way. Hernan replied, he did not understand these forms of law, but would meet the captain and adjust the affair in an amicable manner. But the notary refusing to carry this message, and behaving in an insolent manner, Cortes ordered them to be seized, and concealed himself and his Men among some sandhills near the shore, in hopes that others would land from the ship: at length he directed four of his men to put on the cloaths of the prisoners, and to go down to the sea-side where they should make signals with their cloaks. Through this stratagem, twelve or fourteen armed men rowed towards them in a boat, and as they approached, the four men gradually retired. All of them refused to land, except three of the least considerate, who were immediately taken, while their companions returned on board the vessel, which immediately weighed anchor and stood to sea. Cortes returned to Zempoalla with this small recruit of seven Spaniards; and after his return, he drew up the army in order, forming a body of Spaniards for the vanguard, and another of Indians for the rear, commanded by Mamegi, Thepche and Tamilli, caciques of the mountains; the strongest tamenes were reserved for the artillery, and the rest ordered to take charge of the baggage. In this disposition they began their march on the 16th day of August, and in their route were kindly entertained at Jalapa, Socochima, and Texucla, towns belonging to their confederacy. The first difficulty they met with in their road to Mexico, was the rough part of the mountain, and the inclemency of the weather,

weather, from which the soldiers had no shelter. Before their provisions began to fail they reached the summit where they found a temple and a great quantity of wood; but, here they made no stay, because on the other side they descried some villages, to which they hastened their march; and the toil of their dispatch was recompensed with refreshment and accommodation.

Here began the large and populous province of Zocothlan, the cacique of which resided in a city of the same name. To this prince Cortes sent notice of his arrival and design, by two of the Zem-poallans, who quickly returned with a favourable answer; and in a short time they discovered the city, which made a magnificent figure with towers and edifices. The cacique came forth and received the general with a kind of forced civility; the quarters provided for the troops were incommodious, and the provisions scanty; so that it plainly appeared he was not very well pleased with his guests; however Cortes prudently stifled his resentment, that he might give the Indian no handle to engage him in hostilities, which might retard his journey. Next day the cacique, whose name was Olindeth, repeated his visit to Cortes, who receiving him with great civility, among other questions, asked whether he was subject to the king of Mexico. The other immediately answered, "Is there any man upon earth who is not a slave to Moteczuma?" When Hernan scornfully replied, that he himself, and those who accompanied him, obeyed another king, who had many subjects more powerful than Moteczuma. The cacique, without paying much attention to these words, proceed to display the grandeur of his emperor; he said, the
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provinces under his dominion were not to be reckoned ; and that he resided in an impregnable city, founded in the midst of lakes ; then he expatiated upon the immensity of his riches, the strength of his armies, and the misery of his enemies, above twenty thousand of whom were yearly sacrificed to his gods. Cortes easily perceived this discourse had been dictated by the court of Mexico, in order to deter him from proceeding : but seeming ignorant of his design, answered, that he was already well informed of the grandeur of Motezuma ; that his own embassy was peaceable ; but, nevertheless, he desired peace without being afraid of war ; for, the most inconsiderable Spaniard was able to cope with a whole army of Indians ; that he would never draw the sword without provocation ; but if compelled to acts of hostility, he would destroy his enemies with fire and sword : for nature would assist him with her prodigies, and heaven with its lightening. This declaration, which has the air of a ridiculous rhodomontade, was extremely well calculated for the intellects of the Indians, who were confounded and overawed at the intrepidity of the Spaniards, which they attributed to something supernatural.

The cacique owned to father Bartholome de Olmedo, that the Christians were of a superior race of men, that their reasons were surprisingly convincing, and their valour invincible : from this moment he entirely altered his conduct, and plentifully supplied them with all necessaries for the space of five days, during which they stayed in Zocothlan. The cacique treated him with infinite respect, presented him with four female slaves, and offered to supply him with twenty noble Indians as guides for the army. Notwithstanding these civi-

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lities, he was still at heart a slave to Motezuma; and, by his direction, advised Cortes to continue his march by the way of Cholula, telling him it was a fertile country, well peopled with inhabitants, who would plentifully supply his troops in their passage; whereas, should he take the road of Tlascala, he must march through a country possessed by a people addicted to cruelty and war. This advice, however, was rejected, in consequence of the information Cortes received from the Zempoallans of his army, who assured him, that the Cholulans were a faithless people, wholly devoted to Motezuma, whose troops were quartered in all the towns of their district; whereas the Tlascalans were friends to the Totonagues and Zempoallans, and continually at war with Motezuma; they therefore counselled him to march through that province, where he would be well treated, as their ally and confederate. He then proceeded on his march to the province of Tlascala that bordered upon Zocothlan, and hearing the country was in arms, he resolved to halt in a small town called Xacazingo, until he should be better informed of their intention.

Tlascala, being about fifty leagues in circumference, abounded with inhabitants, though the land was mountainous and uneven, and the houses of the town were built upon different eminences, partly for defence, and partly with a view to leave the plain for the purposes of cultivation. At first the people were governed by kings; till, weary of their tyranny, they shook off the yoke, and formed themselves into a commonwealth: they divided the towns into a certain number of districts, and each sent a representative to Tlascala,

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cala, where they constituted a senate, the resolutions of which the whole province obeyed. Under this form of government they had long maintained themselves against the kings of Mexico, and were now at their highest pitch of power; for the cruelty of Motezuma had augmented the number of their confederates, among whom they reckoned the Otomies, a warlike nation, famed alike for valour and barbarity.

To this republic Cortes sent four of the chief Zempoallans, who were amply instructed by Donna Marina and Aguilar, how to harangue the senate, in demanding a passage for the Spaniards through the territories of Tlascala. They immediately assumed the ensigns of ambassadors; each putting on his shoulder a wreathed cotton tippet knotted at the ends, bearing in the right hand a large arrow, and on the left arm a target of shell: when the purport of the embassy is war, the feathers of the arrow are red; but white, when their errand is peace. By these symbols they were known and respected on the high roads, tho', if they turned aside, they forfeited their privileges and immunities.

In this manner the four envoys of Cortes entered Tlascala, where they were lodged in a house set apart for the reception of ambassadors, and next day were introduced into the senate, the members of which rose from their little chairs, called yopales, to bid them welcome. The ambassadors entered with their arrows raised on high, and their tippets on their heads, in token of extraordinary veneration; then, having paid their respects to the senate, they walked leisurely to the middle of the hall, where they kneeled with their eyes fixed upon the ground, waiting for

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for permission to speak. When the eldest senator desired them to declare their business, they seated themselves upon their legs, and he who was pitched upon as the orator expressed himself to this effect.

“ Noble republic, we give you notice that an
“ invincible race of men are arrived from the
“ east, and seem to be more than human: for,
“ they sail upon palaces, and wield the thunder
“ and lightning: yet they worship an Almighty
“ Being superior to our gods, who is offended at
“ the sacrifices of human blood. Their general
“ is ambassador from a powerful prince, who
“ desires to reform the abuses of our country,
“ and repress the tyranny of Motezuma: he has
“ already rescued our provinces from oppression,
“ and as he means to pass through your territories,
“ in his way to Mexico, he desires to know where-
“ in you have been aggrieved by the tyrant, that
“ he may redress your wrongs. We have expe-
“ rienced his valour and beneficence, and ad-
“ monish and request you to entertain those stran-
“ gers as the friends of your allies.” The speech
concluded, the four Indians raised themselves on
their knees, and, making a profound reverence to
the senate, sat down as before, in expectation of
an answer. The senators gave the ambassadors
to understand, that they received the salutation
of their confederates with all imaginable gra-
titude; but that they must deliberate upon the
answer to be given to the strangers. Then the
Indians retired, and the senate began to discuss
the demand of Cortes, which produced very ob-
stinate debates: some proposing to comply with
his request, and others insisting upon repelling
him by force of arms. The chief of those who
espoused

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espoused the pacific opinion was an old senator, called Magiscatzen, who reminded them of a prophecy, importing that an invincible race of men would come from the oriental regions, with such dominion over the elements, that they should found floating cities upon the seas, and use fire and air to subdue the earth: he said these strangers were certainly the very people predicted; they came from the east, their arms were fire, they dwelt in floating-houses, and, by their actions in Tabasco, they proved themselves invincible. The speech of Magiscatzen was received with acclamation and applause; when the favourable intention of the senate was wholly altered by the interposition of Zicotencal their general, a young man of great ferocity and ambition, who ridiculed the prophecy, at least the supposition of its being verified in the arrival of the Spaniards, whom he represented as ordinary men, whose vessels and arms were the effect of human industry, whose valour was not uncommon, tho' their pride, cruelty, and avarice were intolerable; for they contemned the laws and customs of the Indians, thirsted after their gold, lived at discretion, destroyed their temples, and blasphemed their gods: with respect to the signals of heaven, they were always deemed as fore-runners of calamity, and therefore ought to be interpreted as warnings to oppose and extirpate those presumptuous strangers. These arguments preponderated with a people trained to war and ambitious of glory: they ordered the general to form the army and try his strength with the Christians, and in the mean time detained the ambassadors, intending, should they be worsted,

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to lay the blame of the war upon the ferocity of their Otomy allies, and use the intercession of the Zempoallans in procuring peace.

The Spaniards having waited eight days at Zacazingo for the return of his messengers, whose delay he looked upon as a confirmation of the hostile intent of the Tlascalans, Cortes resolved to march towards their city, that he might discover their designs, or attack them before they were joined by their allies. This was a prudent resolution; for they had not time to guard a strong wall of hewn stone, extending from one mountain to another as a bulwark to their territories, through the opening of which he passed without opposition. The Spaniards, having passed it without difficulty, formed themselves again into a compact body, and continuing their march, discovered at a considerable distance twenty or thirty Indians, who by their plumes appeared to be soldiers in the field. Cortes sent his scouts to allure them with signs of peace, while he followed with eight horse, ordering his infantry to advance at leisure. The Indians stayed, until the six horse that were detached before the rest drew near; then they betook themselves to their heels, until they joined their party, when they faced about and stood in a posture of defence. They were immediately attacked by fourteen horse, and stood their ground without flinching, notwithstanding the damage they received, until they were reinforced by five thousand Indians who had lain in ambuscade; at the same time the Spanish infantry came up, and formed themselves into a battalion, to sustain the fury with which the enemy advanced; but at

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the first volley of the fire-arms, which did great execution, they turned their backs, and the Spaniards taking advantage of their confusion, fell upon them with such resolution, that in a little time they quitted the field, leaving sixty men dead and some prisoners. Cortes would not allow them to be pursued, but took possession of some houses, in which they passed the night. Next day, they were opposed by a larger body of the enemy, who discharging a flight of arrows and a great quantity of stones from slings, began to retreat. Cortes perceiving that their retreat was rather the effect of stratagem than of fear, followed in close order, until having reached the top of an eminence in the road, he discovered a plain on the other side, almost covered with an army of forty thousand men, composed of various nations, distinguished by the various colours of their ensigns. The Spaniards, without being discouraged at the sight of such odds marched down the hill, and forming on the even ground below, where the horses could act, moved on the attack: the Indians still retired, until seeing them at a distance from the hill, they opened to the right and left, running furiously to occupy the ground on both sides, then closing in a circle, surrounded the Spaniards, who threw themselves into the form of an hollow square, to sustain their fury. The air was darkened with arrows, an innumerable quantity of darts and stones rained upon the Spaniards, and the Indians perceiving the little effect of these missiles, boldly attacked them with pikes and swords. Cortes trampled under foot all that were in his way, the fire-arms killed them in heaps, and the artillery mowed down whole companies. Numbers were employed to carry off
their

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their killed and wounded; the multitude began to diminish, and their fury to abate: then Cortes placed his horse on the wings, and charged them with redoubled vigour. At first, they made a gallant resistance, but the horses threw them into disorder, so that they began to fly on all sides, wounding and treading one another under foot. During the fray, Pedro de Moron being mounted on a mare, engaged himself too far, so that he was taken after having received several wounds; and tho' soon released, the mare was killed, and the Indians closed again, and renewed the battle. The Spaniards were now tired with action, when, all of a sudden, the cries of the enemy ceased, and this silence was succeeded by their kettle-drums sounding a retreat, in obedience to which, they moved slowly off. Xicotencal ordered this retreat to be sounded, because the greatest part of his commanders being killed, he would not venture to manage such an army without officers: yet, notwithstanding their great loss, they entered their quarters triumphant, because they had not been overcome, and the mare's head was carried as a trophy before the general, who sent it to Tlascala, where it was sacrificed in one of their temples, with great solemnity. In this battle, nine or ten Spanish soldiers were wounded, and some of the Zempoallans, who did good service on this occasion, fired by the example of the Spaniards. Cortes, perceiving a small town on a rising ground that commanded that country, marched thither, and found abundance of provision; but, as there was not accommodation for the whole army, the Zempoallans built huts for themselves, and chearfully raised some works of earth and fascines to secure the place, which was naturally strong, and of difficult access.

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Various were the sentiments of the Tlascalans upon the event of this day's engagement. Some cried out for the peace; Magiscatzen valued himself upon having foreseen the disaster: others breathed nothing but menaces, comforting themselves with the death of the mare. Xicotencal demanded supplies for the army, and one of the confederates arriving at this period with ten thousand men, this succour encouraged them to prosecute the war with fresh vigour. Mean while, the four Zempoallan envoys having made their escape, returned to the Spanish camp by different ways, and gave an account of their having been destined by the Tlascalans as sacrifices to the god of war, as soon as Xicotencal took the field: and this information had such an effect upon their companions, that Cortes, who wanted to renew his offers of peace, could not find messengers to carry the proposals.

A profound silence reigned through the whole country, so that the very stillness was suspicious, and the retreat of Xicotencal had all the marks of an undecided dispute: he had reason, therefore, to maintain his post, to the strength of which he had added by new works: yet, foreseeing the Indians would interpret his inaction to fear, he resolved to sally from his quarters the very next morning, in order to reconnoitre the country, and disturb the enemy: which resolution he in person executed. He proceeded as far as some villages in the road to Tlascala, where he took several prisoners, from whom he learned that Xicotencal was encamped about two leagues from thence. Cortes having permitted the Zempoallans to destroy the country with fire and sword, returned to the camp, from whence he set at liberty all the prisoners he had made in this excursion, that they might retain

tain the impression of Spanish generosity ; and of those who were taken on the day of battle, he chose two or three to carry a message to Xicotencal, expressing his concern for the loss he had sustained in the action, which was owing to the obstinacy of his nation, in rejecting the peaceable request of the Spaniards ; and desiring that they would now listen to terms of accommodation, otherwise he should be obliged to destroy them root and branch. The prisoners departed with this message, promising faithfully to return with an answer ; and indeed few hours elapsed before they kept their word : for, they came back in a bloody condition, having been mangled by order of Xicotencal, for their presumption in delivering such a charge ; to which he answered by the same messengers, that he would at sun-rise meet the Christians in the field, when he made no doubt but he should carry them alive to the altars of his gods, on which their blood should be sacrificed : he, therefore, gave notice of his resolution, that their captain might have time to prepare himself ; for, he was not accustomed to lessen the glory of his victories, in attacking his enemy by surprize. Cortes, tho' piqued at the insolence of this barbarian, would not neglect his advice ; but at day-break he drew his troops into the field, leaving in the quarters such a force as he thought necessary for their defence, and took possession of a part where he could receive the enemy with advantage. There he formed his men, securing his flanks with the artillery, and putting himself at the head of his horse, in order to bring succour to every place where it should be wanted. The scouts soon returned with intelligence that the enemy was upon the march, and presently their vanguard appeared : the plain began to fill with

armed Indians, so that the eye could not reach the end of their troops; their number amounted to above fifty thousand men, consisting of the whole strength of the republic and its allies. They displayed a great eagle of gold, the ensign of Tlascala, which they never brought into the field except in their greatest undertakings, and advanced with equal intrepidity and expedition. When they came within cannon-shot, the artillery struck such a terror into them, that they halted for some time, divided between fear and indignation; but, rage prevailing, they rushed forward, until they were near enough to use their slings and arrows, and then they were a second time stopped by the discharge of the fire-arms and cross-bows. The engagement lasted a long time, until the Tlascalans, perceiving the carnage that was made among them by the Spaniards, who stood safe in the advantage of their arms and disposition, obeyed the dictates of despair, and bursting among them like a torrent, broke their ranks by dint of weight and multitude. There was now occasion for all the valour of the soldiers, all the bravery and conduct of the officers; and indeed they formed again by main force, bearing down all that did not give way to their amazing efforts. At this very juncture, a very great disturbance was observed among the enemy: their troops moved to and fro, dividing and turning their arms against each other; till at length they retired together in a tumultuous manner.

It was afterwards known that the cause of this disturbance and retreat was the insolence of Xicotencal, who upbraided one of the confederate caciques with cowardice, because he did not advance when the rest were engaged. The Indian chief, who commanded ten thousand men, replied with qual

equal obloquy, a personal challenge ensued, and the other caciques espoused the quarrel of their friend: at length, the confederates retired, and Xicotencal, finding himself abandoned by his allies, left the field and the victory to the Spaniards, after having seen a vast number of his people slain. Though Cortes lost only one soldier on this occasion, some of the men returned to the quarters in a melancholy humour, produced by the reflection of their having been put into disorder, and loudly declared that they would not sacrifice themselves to the obstinacy of Cortes, but return of themselves to Vera Cruz, and leave him alone to his own ambition and temerity. This spirit of mutiny increased to such a degree, that Cortes found it necessary to assemble and harangue the soldiers: he observed, that they had already vanquished and overthrown the Tlascalans, who, would certainly sue for peace; so that they should proceed to Mexico with additional reputation, acquired from the conquest of a warlike people: but, should they now attempt to retreat, they must forfeit all hopes of their enterprize, bring themselves into contempt with allies who now looked upon them as invincible, and expose themselves to the Tlascalans, who, knowing all the passes of the country, would harass them in their march by ambuscades, so as to intercept their return, and perhaps effect their total destruction. He exerted his eloquence with such success, that one of the mutineers cried aloud, "Fellow-soldiers, our general is in the right: we cannot now retire without being inevitably lost." His resolution was applauded by the acclamations of the whole army.

The inhabitants of Tlascala, intimidated by the event of the second battle, cried aloud for peace with those strangers, who were certainly invincible

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and immortal. The senate concluded they were magicians, and, resolving to oppose enchantment, consulted their own wizzards, who, pretending to have discovered the cause of their own miscarriage, affirmed the Spaniards, being the offspring of the sun, derived a superior force from the warm and invigorating beams of their father: but, that when he disappeared in the west, that influence ceased, and they remained dispirited and withered like the herbs of the field. They therefore proposed that the christians should be attacked by night, and utterly destroyed before they could be animated by the rising sun. This important intelligence was communicated to Xicotencal by the senate, with orders to execute the plan, and he immediately began to make proper dispositions for the action.

Mean while the Spaniards raised contributions among the neighbouring villages, driving the detached parties of the enemy before them, tho' they used the unarmed natives so well as to gain both their good will and provision. Cortes was particularly careful in preserving strict discipline: he always kept sentinels posted at a distance from the quarters: the guards mounted and were relieved with the greatest regularity; the horses stood saddled all night, and the soldiers either watched or rested upon their arms. This precision was of the utmost consequence; for, on the night destined for the attack projected by the Tlascalans, the out-sentinels discovered a body of the enemy marching towards their quarters, with an unaccustomed slowness and silence; and notice being given of their approach, the soldiers manned the works, and cheerfully waited to give them a warm reception. Zicotencal brought with him ten thousand men, whom he ordered to attack the quarters on three sides, and they

they executed his commands with equal speed and resolution : but, met with such a powerful and unexpected resistance, that many fell upon the spot, and the rest were infected with the greater fear, as they had come in full confidence of finding the Spaniards weak and unprepared. Xicotencal was now sensible of the delusion of the forcerers ; but, his anger animated him to such a pitch of courage, that he returned to the assault with redoubled fury : his Indians helping one another to climb over the wall, and one party succeeding as another was slain, for a considerable length of time, during which they suffered as much from their own disorder, as from the arms of the Christians ; till at length, the general finding it impracticable to carry his point, ordered the signal to be given for withdrawing his men. But Cortes no sooner perceived them slackening in the attack, and retiring from the wall, than he sent out part of his infantry and all his horse, furnished with breast-plates full of bells, to charge the Indians, who were so terrified, that they fled in confusion, leaving a great number of dead and wounded behind them. This victory was obtained with the loss of only one Zempoallan, a circumstance altogether surprising, considering the innumerable heaps of arrows, darts, and stones that were found within the intrenchments.

The news no sooner reached Tlascala, than the inhabitants demanded peace, and justice against the magicians. The senate assembling, agreed to punish the impostors, two of whom were immediately sacrificed to their gods, and to implore forgiveness of the strangers, whom they now certainly believed to be the celestial men mentioned in their prophecy. A messenger was sent to inform Xico-

tencal of the senate's resolution, and command him to desist from all operations of war. The general, however, exasperated against the Spaniards, absolutely refused to comply with this command; and resolved to assault the enemy again by night, after he should have informed himself of the strength and nature of their fortifications. For this purpose, he employed soldiers to enter Spanish quarters among the peasants, who resorted thither to exchange provisions for baubles. The spies spent great part of the morning among the christians, unsuspected, until a Zempoallan, who had perceived one of them examining the fortifications, communicated his suspicion to Cortes, who ordered him to be seized and put to the torture, when he made an ample confession, by means of which his confederates were apprehended, and the whole scheme discovered. The general, thinking it necessary to act with rigour on this occasion, ordered, that of fifteen who seemed the most obstinate, some should lose an hand, others be deprived of their thumbs, and dismissed to tell Xicotencal he was prepared for his coming, and had sent those spies alive, that he might not lose their information concerning the Spanish works.

The Indian army was struck with astonishment at this bloody spectacle, and their message made a deep impression on the mind of their general, who now believed, that the Christians could not have penetrated this design, without supernatural intelligence. While he ruminated on this reflection, he was overtaken by several ministers, who divested him of the supreme command, on account of his insolence and disobedience. He was immediately deserted by his captains and men, who being already overwhelmed with consternation, dispersed
different

different ways, leaving him to return to Tlascala as a private senator.

All that night, and next day, the Spaniards expected an attack; but on the second morning, the advanced sentinels discovered a number of loaded Indians, coming along the road of Tlascala. There were four persons of rank, adorned with the tokens of peace, followed by thirty tamenes loaded with provision. As they approached, they halted from time to time, bowing their bodies and touching the earth with their hands, which they afterwards applied to their lips, as signals of humility and respect.

Donna Marina appearing upon the wall, asked from whom and for what purpose they came? and when they answered, "From the senate of Tlascala, to treat of peace;" they were permitted to enter. Cortes received them with great gravity and state, and they having repeated their prostrations delivered their embassy, consisting of apologies for what was past, laying the blame of the war upon the ferocious disposition of the Otomies and Chontales their allies; and suing for peace in the name of the senate and inhabitants of Tlascala, who earnestly requested that he would immediately march into their city, where they should be served as children of the sun and brothers of the gods. Hernan, with affected severity in his countenance, desired they would tell the senate from him, they ought to look upon their admission to his presence, as a mark of his goodness and condescension, considering the methods they had taken to incur his displeasure: that tho' peace was agreeable to his inclination, they had no reason to expect he should grant it immediately, until they had shewn a disposition to deserve it: he would, however,

however, endeavour to appease the anger of his captains, and in the mean time the Tlascalans would do well to facilitate an accommodation, by amending their conduct.

The fame of the Spaniards increased with their victories; and Motezuma, who had intelligence of every thing that passed, was much alarmed at their success, fearing that, should the victors and the vanquished unite, they might be able to overturn his whole empire. Yet, instead of assembling an army, he made no preparations of that kind, as if he had been with-held by some superior genius; but had recourse again to negotiation, and sent another present to Cortes by ambassadors, who had orders to divert him from his intended journey, and, if possible, to hinder him from coming to an accommodation with the Tlascalans. Five noble Mexicans being charged with this embassy, arrived in the Spanish quarters soon after the Tlascalans departed; and were graciously received by Cortes, who thankfully accepted of the present, and heard their message, which contained a congratulation on his success against the Tlascalans; and a request that he would not think of coming to his court for weighty reasons. But Hernan did not dispatch them immediately, being desirous that they should with their own eyes see the Tlascalans humbled; nor did they wish to depart until they should be able to accomplish the real aim of their embassy.

The republic ordered the villages to furnish provisions gratis for the Spanish army, which now enjoyed plenty of every thing, and in two days Cortes was visited by Xicotencal at the head of fifty noblemen, who attended him with the ensigns of peace, to execute their commission from the se-

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nate. He was above the middle stature, well made, rather muscular than corpulent; and tho' his features were not agreeable, his aspect commanded regard: He was habited in a white mantle, adorned with jewels; he appeared with the free air of a soldier before Cortes, took his seat, and having told who he was, owned frankly that he was the cause of the war, believing the Spaniards were the favourites of Motezuma, whom he abhorred; but now he was come to put himself into the hands of his conqueror, hoping by this submission to obtain pardon for his country, which he requested once, twice and thrice, in the name and by the authority of the senate, nobles and commons of Tlascala. He likewise intreated him to enter the city, where he would find quarters provided for his men; and begged the inhabitants might be well used, and their gods and wives protected from military license.

Cortes, in the hearing of the Mexican ambassadors, after having complained with vehemence of the unjust war they had carried on, granted the peace they desired, and promised that no violence should be committed by his soldiers; adding, that when he should be disposed to enter their city, he would give them notice to make the necessary preparations.

Xicotencal, interpreting this delay into a doubt of his sincerity, offered himself and his attendants as hostages: but Cortes would not accept of any security, which he said was quite unnecessary to an army, which had maintained itself in the midst of declared enemies; and promising to march as soon as he could make the proper dispositions, he broke up the conference, giving his hand to Xicotencal

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at parting, telling him, that he would return the visit, after he had dispatched the Mexican ambassadors, who made a jest of this peace, and pretended to wonder that so wise a man as the Spanish general should be deceived by the Tlascalans, a barbarous people, who sought to lull him into security, that they might destroy him and his soldiers with the greater ease. But, when they saw him fixed in his resolution to grant a peace, which he said was the chief intention of his arms, they began to be pensive, and requested him to delay his march to Tlascala for six days, within which period two of their number should go and inform their prince of this transaction, while the rest would stay there to expect his resolution. To this request Cortes consented; for, he did not think proper to break with Motezuma, who, in consequence of this intimation, might lay aside his unwillingness to be seen.

The ambassadors returned, with six gentlemen of the royal family, and a splendid retinue, bearing another present of greater value than the former, and a message to this import: That Motezuma desired to be a friend of the great prince whom the Spaniards obeyed, and would pay him a tribute, with the proviso that they should enter into no league with the Tlascalans, and lay aside their design of coming to Mexico, as his people were determined to suffer no strangers to approach him.

Cortes postponed his answer till after they should have reposed themselves, because he desired that they should be witnesses of the peace with Tlascala, and thought it of importance to detain them as long as he could, that Motezuma might have the less time to prepare for hostilities. These ambas-

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fies alarmed the Tlascalans so much, that they came to a resolution to visit the Spanish quarters in the form of a senate, to convince Cortes of their sincerity, and break off his negotiation with the Mexicans. Accordingly the senators were carried upon the shoulders of inferiors officers, and arrived in solemn procession, with a numerous attendance, at the quarters of the general, who received them with his accustomed state and civility; and after they were seated, he was harrangued by the father of Xicotencal, an old blind man, of a very venerable appearance; who gave him to understand, that the senate of Tlascala were come to make their submission, sue for peace on his own terms, and dissuade him from engaging in any league with Motezuma, whom they represented as a tyrant, and foe to humanity and justice: he likewise intreated him to honour their city with his presence, and was so pressing in this request, that Cortes assured them, he would march to Tlascala as soon as the people of the villages could be assembled, to conduct his artillery and baggage. In consequence of this declaration, he next morning found five hundred tamemes at his quarters, and having made the proper dispositions, forthwith began his march, in that excellent order which his little army always preserved. The fields were filled with multitudes of people, who came forth to behold the sight, and behaved with such gesticulation and outcries, as the Spaniards mistook for the clamour and threatening of war, until they were undeceived by Donna Marina, who told them this was the manner in which the Indians expressed their joy on festivals. At some distance from the town, the Christians were received by the senators and nobles, who, having made their reverences without halting,

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ing, turned about and marched before, in token of profound regard. At their entrance, the city resounded with shouts, acclamations, and the disagreeable, musick of their pipes, drums and horns; so great was the concourse of people, that the magistrates could hardly keep the passage free: some women threw flowers on the Spaniards, while others, more bold, put nosegays into their hands; the priests, clad in their long sacrificing garments, came with their copper censers, fumigating the strangers as they passed: and the countenance of all the spectators formed a groupe expressive of joy, admiration and awe.

On the 8th day of November in the year 1519, early in the morning, the army began its march, leaving on one side the city of Magiscatzingo, and on the other Cuyoacan, until they discovered the city of Mexico. About half way, they were met by four thousand nobles and officers, who came out to receive them. At a little distance from Mexico was a bulwark of stone, which took up all the breath of the causeway, upon another part of which were the gates, terminated by a draw-bridge, which, with a second fortification, defended the entrance of the city. As soon as the nobles passed to the other side of the bridge, they fell back, making a lane for the army to march, and then appeared a spacious street of houses uniformly built, the windows and battlements of which were full of spectators, though the street itself was quite empty, by order of Motezuma, who resolved to come and receive Cortes in person, as a mark of particular favour.

The Spaniards had scarce entered the city, when they perceived the first troop of the royal retinue, consisting of two hundred noblemen of Motezuma's family:

family: they approached in two files, without lifting their eyes from the ground, and as they drew near, fell back on each side. Then appeared afar off a larger company, in the midst of which was Motezuma, carried on the shoulders of his favourites, in a chair of burnished gold, surrounded with various plumage beautifully arranged. Four persons of distinction held over him a canopy of green feathers, interwoven with ornaments of silver; and he was preceded by three officers with golden rods, which they lifted up from time to time as a signal of the king's approach, that all might prostrate themselves and hide their heads. Cortes dismounted before they met, and Motezuma alighting from his chair at the same time, some Indians went before, spreading carpets, that his sacred feet might not touch the ground. He came forward with a slow and solemn pace, leaning upon his cousins the princes of Iztacpalapa and Tezeuco, was of a good presence, about forty years of age, of a middle stature, and a constitution rather delicate than robust. His nose was aquiline, his complexion remarkably fair among the Indians; his hair reached a little way below his ears, and his eyes were lively, tho' his look seemed majestic and thoughtful. He wore a mantle of the finest cotton, tied carelessly on his shoulders, that covered the greatest part of his body, the end trailing upon the ground, and his robe was covered with gold, pearls, and precious stone. He wore a mitre of light gold, and on his feet were shoes of that metal, bound with studded straps, that came round part of his leg.

Cortes advanced with becoming haste, and made a profound reverence, which Motezuma returned in the manner of his country, to the astonishment
of

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of the Indians, who had never before known such an instance of condescension in any of their princes, much less in their emperor, who would scarcely bend his neck to the gods. Hernan had put over his coat of mail a chain of glass, curiously set together, in imitation of diamonds and emeralds, which he reserved as a present for the first audience; and, being close to the emperor threw it about his neck. The princes who supported him, interposed with some emotion, signifying, that it was not lawful to approach so near their prince; but Mōtezuma reprimanded them, and accepted the present as a jewel of inestimable value; in acknowledgment for which, he, with his own hands, put upon Hernan's neck a very rich ornament of crimson shells, joined together with great art, at every one of which hung four crabs of gold of excellent workmanship. Cortes made a speech fitted to the occasion, and Motezuma having answered it concisely, commanded one of his supporters to conduct the stranger to his lodging, while he himself leaning on the other, went to his chair, and returned to the palace.

The quarters provided for the Spaniards were in one of the royal houses, so large as to lodge the whole army: the walls were of stone, very thick, and flanked with towers, which rendered it very defensible: some chambers were furnished with cotton hangings, of various colours; the chairs were of wood, each being cut out of one piece; the bedsteads were provided with curtains like pavillions, the bottoms of the beds were of palm-mats, and the bolsters of the same rolled up. Cortes having distributed his guards, and lodged his artillery, found a splendid banquet prepared for him and his captains, and great store of provisions for the

the soldiers, with many Indians who served them in profound silence and exact order. In the evening he was visited by Motezuma, who came with the same pomp and equipage we have already described, and was received in the principal square of the house by Hernan, who attended him at the door of his apartment, where he made a profound reverence. Motezuma, taking his seat with an air of majesty, ordered a chair to be brought for Cortes, and the company retiring to one side, he is said to have spoke to this effect:

“ Before you deliver your embassy, illustrious
 “ captain and valiant stranger, let you and I lay
 “ aside those prejudices we have imbibed of each
 “ other, from the misinformation of common re-
 “ port. In some places you have been told that
 “ I am a god, that my power is invincible, and
 “ my riches immense; that my palaces are cover-
 “ ed with gold, and that the earth groans beneath
 “ the weight of my treasure: upon other occasions
 “ you have heard that I am a tyrant, unjust, in-
 “ solent, and cruel; but you have been imposed
 “ upon by both representations: this arm of flesh
 “ and blood shews that I am mortal, and these
 “ walls and roofs of stone and lime, demonstrate
 “ that my palaces are not made or covered with
 “ gold. From these instances you may conclude,
 “ that the account of my vices is likewise exagger-
 “ rated by the malice of my enemies, and in-
 “ gratitude of my rebellious subjects. In like man-
 “ ner we have received various informations of
 “ your nature and conduct. Some have affirmed,
 “ that you are gods who grasp the thunder, com-
 “ mand the elements, and compel the wild beasts
 “ to obey your directions; others have represent-
 “ ed you as proud, vindictive, voluptuous, and
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“ transported with an insatiable thirst after the gold
 “ which our country produces : yet now I see I have
 “ been alike deceived by these different accounts.
 “ You are made like other men, tho’ distinguished
 “ from us by the peculiarities of your own coun-
 “ try. The beasts that obey you are large deer,
 “ tamed and trained up to discipline. Your arms
 “ that resemble lightening, I conceive to be barrels
 “ of metal, and their effect, like that of our
 “ sarbacans, proceed from compressed air striving
 “ for a vent : the fire, noise and smoke are owing
 “ to enchantment. I am likewise informed by my
 “ ambassadors and servants, that you are courteous
 “ and religious; and your resentments are founded
 “ on reason ; that you are valiant and inured to
 “ hardships, and among other virtues, display li-
 “ berality, which never exists in a covetous mind.
 “ In a word, we believe that the great prince
 “ you obey is descended from Quezalcoal, lord of
 “ the seven caves of the Navatlaques, and lawful
 “ king of those seven nations that gave rise to
 “ the Mexican empire : for, from the tradition of
 “ many ages, we know that he departed from these
 “ countries, to conquer new regions in the east,
 “ leaving a promise, that in process of time his
 “ descendants should return, to model our laws
 “ and reform our government. Therefore we have
 “ already determined, that all things shall be done
 “ for the honour of your prince, who is the off-
 “ spring of such an illustrious progenitor.” To this
 harangue, which was uttered with great gravity,
 Cortes replied to this purpose : “ Sir, true it is,
 “ we have heard different accounts of your charac-
 “ ter, which some have vilified, and others extolled :
 “ but as the Spaniards have penetration enough to

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“ distinguish the colours of discourse, we have given
 “ no credit, either to your rebels or flatterers,
 “ but come into your presence with full assurance
 “ of your being a great and equitable prince. You
 “ justly conclude we are immortal, tho’ more valiant
 “ and intelligent than your vassals, because
 “ born in a climate of more powerful influence.
 “ Our beasts are not deer, but of a species more
 “ fierce and generous, inclined to war, and aspiring
 “ with a sort of ambition to the glory of their
 “ masters: and, lastly, our arms are made by human
 “ industry, without any mixture or help of
 “ magic, an abominable art, which we detest and
 “ abhor. I am come to your majesty, as ambassador
 “ from the most powerful monarch the sun
 “ shines on from his first rising: he desires to be
 “ your friend and confederate; and tho’ he might,
 “ according to the tradition of your own histories,
 “ pretend to be more absolute in these dominions,
 “ he makes use of his authority with a view only
 “ to your own advantage, and to convince you
 “ of your errors in point of religion, which are
 “ altogether dismal and deplorable, inasmuch as
 “ you have departed from the worship of the true
 “ God, to pay your adoration to insensible pieces of
 “ wood, the work of your own hands, representing
 “ devils and unclean spirits, to whom you
 “ impiously and inhumanly sacrifice the blood of
 “ your fellow-creatures.” When he finished his
 his oration, Motezuma rising from his seat, “ I
 “ accept, (said he) with all due acknowledgment,
 “ the confederacy and friendship you propose from
 “ the great descendant of Quezalcoal: but all gods
 “ are good, and yours may be what you say,
 “ without offence to mine.” He then ordered some
 Indians to bring in a valuable present for Cortes,
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consisting of pieces of gold, cotton robes, and other curiosities, and at the same time distributed some jewels among the Spaniards who were present, with an air of chearful generosity.

Next day, the Spanish general demanded audience, which being immediately granted, he put on his gayest apparel, without quitting his arms, and set out for the palace with Pedro de Alvaredo, Gonzalo de Sandoval, Juane Velasquez de Leon, Diego de Ordaz, and six or seven favourite soldiers. The streets were filled with an innumerable concourse of people, who opened with reverence to let them pass; and amidst their acclamations often pronounced the word Teule, which in their language signified god, an appellation that sounded well in the ears of the Spaniards, whose success depended so much upon the opinion of the Mexicans. At a considerable distance appeared the palace of Motezuma, an immense pile, with thirty gates opening to as many different streets. The principal front took up one whole side of a very spacious parade, and was of black, red, and white jasper, well polished and skilfully placed. As the Spaniards approached this entrance, the Indians who accompanied Cortes walked up to one side of it, and then retiring with a mysterious motion, formed a semicircle, that they might enter by two and two, for they deemed it irreverent to enter the royal palace in a crowd. After having passed three squares, they came to Motezuma's apartments, which they admired for their largeness and furniture. The floors were covered with mats, the walls with cotton hangings, interwoven with furs of rabbits; and the innermost rooms were adorned with a kind of tapestry made of feathers, beautifully variegated and arranged: the roofs were of

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cypress, cedar, and other odoriferous woods, ornamented with foliage and relievos; and, tho' the Mexicans knew not the use of nails, the ceilings were contrived in such a manner, that the planks sustained one another. These spacious rooms were filled with officers, who guarded the entrance, according to their rank and quality; and, at the door of the antichamber waited the nobility and magistrates, who received Cortes with great civility, tho' they detained him until they had taken off their shoes and costly robes, and put on others of less finery; for, they thought it presumptuous to appear in their richest apparel before the king. Motezuma, who appeared standing with all his ensigns of royalty about him, advanced some steps to receive Cortes, who approaching with a low bow, the king laid his hands upon his shoulders, and saluted the rest of the Spaniards with an obliging look; then, seating himself, he desired Cortes and all his attendants to sit, and entered into conversation with great familiarity. He asked several questions concerning the nature and politics of the eastern countries, and made very judicious remarks upon the answers of Cortes: then he mentioned the obligation of the Mexicans to the descendant of their first king, and expressed a seeming satisfaction in seeing the prophecy fulfilled in his reign. Cortes industriously turned the discourse upon religion, and in particular exclaimed with such strength of argument against the horrible ceremony of human sacrifices, that the king, partly convinced by his reasons, from that day banished dishes of human flesh from his table, tho' he said it was no cruelty, to offer to the gods prisoners of war already condemned to death. Indeed, he was so devoted to his own religion, and so proud of the

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worship it enjoined, that in a few days he conducted Cortes and some of his principal officers, with father Bartholome, to the chief temple, that they might be eye-witnesses of its magnificence ; but, before they were admitted, he admonished them to behave with decency and respect : then the gates of this spacious edifice were opened, and he himself explained all the particulars of the worship, with so much ceremony and reverential awe, as excited the laughter of the Spaniards. Here Cortes suffering himself to be transported by unseasonable zeal, Permit me, sir, (cried he) to fix the cross of Christ before these images of the devil, and you shall see whether they deserve adoration or contempt. The priests were enraged at this proposal, which also incensed Motezuma, who addressing himself to the Spaniards, observed, that they might have shewn more respect to his person : then he desired they would withdraw ; and, following them to the threshold, " You may return to your house, " my friends, but I shall stay to ask pardon of my " gods, for having suffered you to proceed so far." Yet, blind as he was to his own errors, he never dreamed of tyrannizing over the consciences of other people : on the contrary, he sent his workmen to assist the Spaniards in fitting up a chapel, in which he and his chiefs frequently attended at mass, praising the humanity of the Christian worship.

The Spaniards were every day regaled with some new diversion, at which Motezuma appeared in person, contrary to his former haughtiness and reserve ; and this condescension inspired the people with the greater reverence and esteem for the strangers. He seemed particularly fond of Cortes, with whom he spent a great part of his time,

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and contracted an acquaintance with his captains, to whom he often made presents with great discernment and distinction of merit. In this manner the christians for some time enjoyed an agreeable repose, until they were alarmed by a letter from Vera Cruz, containing the following particulars: That some of the Indians in alliance with the Spaniards having complained to Juan de Escalante, that one of Motezuma's generals called Qualpopoca, had assembled all the Mexican troops upon the frontiers of Zempoalla, and levied contributions upon them with great cruelty, Juan de Escalante had sent deputies to desire the Mexican general to suspend hostilities till further orders should come from the court. To this message Qualpopoca made a very insolent reply, which provoked Juan de Escalante to take the field against him, at the head of two thousand Indians and forty Spaniards:

The Mexican general being informed of his motions, advanced to receive him near a small village, since known by the name of Aloneria, and an engagement ensued, in which, after an obstinate dispute, the Mexicans turned their backs and fled with precipitation to the next town, whither they were pursued by Juan de Escalante, tho', by this time he was almost entirely abandoned by his Indian allies: for, in the beginning of the battle, they had melted away out of fear of the enemy, whose countenance they could not endure. Notwithstanding this desertion, which had not been perceived by the Mexicans, Escalante followed the pursuit with little more than his small number of Spaniards; and ordering the place of their retreat to be fired in different parts, attacked the troops of Qualpopoca with such resolution

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that they were entirely dislodged and routed. This victory, however, cost the Spaniards very dear; for Juan de Escalante and seven soldiers were mortally wounded; and of this number the Mexicans carried off Juan de Arguillo, a man of extraordinary stature and strength, who fell valiantly fighting in a place where he could not be succoured.

This account was the subject of the letter which Cortes received from the council of Vera Cruz, who desired he would appoint a successor to their governor, and give directions touching the posture of their affairs.

Hernan was truly afflicted at the loss of Juan de Escalante, and communicated the letter to his captains, desiring each would separately weigh the circumstances of their present situation, and give their opinions freely at their next meeting. Mean while he himself passed the greatest part of the night in revolving schemes for his conduct on this occasion; and, in the morning, sending for some of the most sensible Indians in his army, asked, if they had lately perceived any change in the discourse or behaviour of the Mexicans. They told him, that the nobles seemed to be pensive and mysterious, that they had heard some of the people mention the expediency of breaking the causeway, and that it was reported, a Spaniard's head had been presented to Motezuma, who viewed with astonishment the largeness and ferocity of the aspect, and ordered it to be immediately concealed. From these circumstances, and especially that of the head, which doubtless belonged to Arguillo, Cortes immediately concluded that the Mexicans were bent upon his destruction, and that the plan was authorised by Motezuma; so that assembling forthwith his council, composed of the captains
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and some favourite soldiers, he imparted the hints he had received from the Indians, and demanded their advice. Some proposed to obtain a passport from Motezuma, and retire openly to Vera Cruz; others suggested that they should retire privately in the night; but the greatest part was of opinion, that they should continue at Mexico, without pretending to know what had passed at Vera Cruz, until they should find a proper opportunity for retreating with safety. Not one of these schemes however met with the approbation of Cortes, who represented, that nothing could sink them lower in the opinion of the Mexicans, than their demanding a passport to retire from that city, which they had entered in spite of all opposition; and that, if Motezuma really harboured any design to their prejudice, he would grant them safe conduct with a view of lulling them into a blind security, that he might afterwards attack them unawares: the proposal of retreating by stealth, he mentioned as a project equally dangerous and disgraceful, as it would lower them in the esteem of their allies, who would desert them as dastardly fugitives, and perhaps recommend themselves to Motezuma, by joining his forces in order to cut off their retreat. Neither could he see how it would be practicable to stay at Mexico, without taking some resolute step for their safety: he therefore gave it as his opinion, that they should seize the person of Motezuma, and convey him to their own quarters, where he might be detained as an hostage for the sincerity of his people. He said, such a bold action would strike the Mexicans with astonishment and consternation, and aggrandize the character of the Spaniards to such a degree, that they would

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never dream of combining against them for the future, especially when they should know that Cortes had discovered the transactions at Vera Cruz, the account of which (they would believe) must have been communicated by some supernatural intelligence. This proposal he supported with such energy of eloquence, as seemed to inspire the hearers with uncommon spirit and alacrity; so that they unanimously applauded the scheme, and left the management of it entirely to his own discretion.

Having pitched upon the hour when the Spaniards were accustomed to wait upon Motezuma, for the execution of the plan, he ordered his men to arm themselves in the quarters, saddle their horses with great secrecy, and wait without noise for further instructions. Then he occupied all the avenues to the palace with small scattered detachments; and, having directed thirty choice men to follow him at a small distance, went thither, accompanied by Pedro de Alvaredo, Gonzalo de Sandoval, Juan Velasquez de Leon, Francisco de Lugo, and Alonzo Davila; nor was there any thing suspicious in their appearing with their arms, which they usually carried as a military ornament. Motezuma, according to custom, came out of his apartment in order to receive the visit; his servants, as usual, retired to another part of the palace; and then Cortes, with an air of resentment, began his complaint against the Mexican general, who had attacked his confederates in violation of the peace, murdered a Spaniard in cool blood, and even endeavoured to vindicate his perfidious behaviour, by declaring he had acted in obedience to his majesty's order.

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Motezuma changed colour on hearing this charge, which however he denied with marks of confusion : and Cortes pretended to believe him innocent ; “ Nevertheless (said he) neither the Spaniards, nor your own subjects will be undeceived, after such a declaration of your general, unless you take some extraordinary step to efface the impression of such a calumny : I am therefore come to beg you will, without any disturbance, repair with us to the Spanish quarters, where you shall be treated with all the reverence and respect due to your majesty, until your character shall be acquitted to the conviction of all mankind.” Motezuma, amazed and incensed at the boldness of the proposal, replied with impatience, that princes of his rank were not accustomed to go tamely to prison, nor would his subjects permit him to forget his dignity so far as to stoop to so base a compliance. Cortes gave him to understand, that provided he would comply, without obliging the Spaniards to forget the respect they had for his person, he should not value the opposition of his subjects. Notwithstanding this remonstrance, he refused to leave his palace ; but, being sensible of the danger to which he was exposed, he offered to send immediately for Quälpopoca, and deliver him, with all his officers, into the hands of Cortes, and, in the mean time, to send two of his own sons to the Spanish quarters, as hostages for the performance of his promise. But these expedients would not satisfy Hernan, whose captains, suspecting that the delay might be dangerous, began to be clamorous, and, among others, Juan Velasquez de Leon called aloud, “ Since he will not hear reason, let us seize him by force, or kill him on the spot.”

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“ spot.” Motezuma hearing this exclamation uttered in an angry tone, desired to know the purport of it, and Donna Marina, to whom he addressed himself, took this opportunity of exhorting him earnestly, as his own vassal and subject, to comply without further hesitation, otherwise his life would be in danger. Her representation had such an effect upon him, that he instantly rose from his seat, saying to Cortes, “ I trust myself in your hands; let us go to your quarters: for so the gods have decreed.” Then he ordered his servants to get ready his chair and equipage, telling his ministers, that, for certain reasons of state, he had resolved to pass some days in the Spanish quarters; and commanded the captain of his guard to put himself at the head of a body of troops, with which he should take Qualpopoca and his officers prisoners, that they might suffer for having invaded Zempoalla. Having given these directions, which were explained by Donna Marina to Cortes and his officers, he quitted the palace with his usual attendants, the Spaniards marching close by his chair on pretence of respect: but, a report being immediately spread, that the strangers had carried off the emperor, the streets were in an instant filled with crowds of people, who rent the air with outcries, throwing themselves on the ground in despair, and shedding floods of tears for their unfortunate prince. In a word, a general insurrection would have certainly ensued, had not Motezuma, with a serenity of countenance, commanded silence, and assured his people, that he was going, of his own accord, to pass a few days with his friends the strangers: and when he reached the quarters, he ordered his guards to dis-

disperse the populace, and his ministers to publish that it should be death for any one to occasion the least tumult or disturbance. He behaved very courteously to the Spanish soldiers, who came forth and received him with great respect ; and having pitched upon an apartment at a distance from those possessed by the Spaniards, it was instantly furnished from his wardrobe. Cortes doubled the guards, and posted sentinels at all the avenues, restricting the ministers and courtiers that came to wait upon Motezuma to a certain number, on pretence of keeping his majesty from being crowded ; and omitting no precaution which an action of that consequence required. At the same time, he preserved all the formalities of decorum, treated him with the same respect he had formerly manifested towards his person ; and indeed one would have imagined, from Motezuma's chearful aspect and seeming good humour, that he was perfectly well pleased with his situation. He distributed some jewels among the Spanish officers, and seemed to be perfectly easy in his mind ; nor did he ever discover the secret of his confinement to his ministers or servants, either because he was ashamed to reveal his own disgrace, or afraid of his life in case they should make the least disturbance. At first, therefore, the Mexicans believed his retreat was voluntary, because they could not suppose the Spaniards would attempt an action that even exceeded the bounds of their imagination ; and when they did discover the truth from the extraordinary vigilance, doubled guards, and martial appearance of the strangers, they were so over-awed by the astonishing boldness of the achievement, that they durst not venture to take any steps towards the enlargement of their prince.

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Notwithstanding his imprisonment, he exercised all the functions of royalty; granted audiences; held councils; and, as usual, regulated the civil, as well as the military government of his kingdoms. His table was supplied from the palace, with extraordinary abundance, that the Spanish soldiers might feast on the superfluity; and he constantly sent delicacies to Cortes and his captains, each of whom he could call by his respective name: nay, he even studied their humours and dispositions, as he occasionally conversed with them, and often seasoned his discourse with pleasantry, in such a manner, however, as not to descend beneath the dignity of his character. All the time which was not dedicated to business, he passed among them; and was wont to say, he was not himself except in company of these strangers, who vied with each other in demonstrations of respect, and these gave him great satisfaction; for he was extremely jealous of his honour, insomuch that a Spaniard having done something, with a view (as he thought) to affront him, he insisted upon his being turned out of his presence, and desired he might never be employed near his person for the future. Sometimes he play'd with Cortes at *tololoque*, which is a game performed by tipping down small pins of gold, with little balls of the same metal; and as they play'd for jewels and trinkets, Motezuma distributed his winnings among the Spaniards, and Hernan shared his good fortune among the emperor's inferior officers. During these amusements, he used to rally Pedro de Alvarado for being a partial marker, tho' he expressed uncommon regard for that captain; and, in a word, seemed insensible of the restraint in which he lived; but, notwithstanding his complaisance in other particulars, he

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he baffled all the efforts made by Cortes and Bartholome de Olmedo to detach him from the absurdities of his religion, to which he adhered with all the zeal of an enthusiast.

In about twenty days after his imprisonment, the captain of the guard returned with Qualpopoca and the other officers, who had surrendered themselves quietly at sight of the royal signet, which Motezuma had given to the captor as a mark of authority; and, after they had been brought before the emperor, who spoke to them with reserve, they were delivered into the hands of Cortes, to whom they confessed themselves guilty of having violated the peace of their own accord, as well as of having ordered Arguillo to be put to death in cold blood; all finding the Spanish general determined to inflict the punishment due to their crimes, they endeavoured to save their lives by impeaching the emperor, whose orders they had obeyed; Cortes, however, affected to treat that impeachment as a malicious aspersion; and after a formal trial, they were convicted and sentenced to be burnt. But, in order to deter Motezuma from taking any step to prevent their execution, the general thought it was absolutely necessary to take another bold stroke; he therefore went into the presence of that prince, accompanied with Alonso Marina and three or four captains, with a company of soldiers carrying fetters; and, after having saluted him with his usual respect, assumed a presumptuous look; while he told him, in an exalted voice, that Qualpopoca and his accomplices had confessed the crimes for which they were condemned to death; but as they affirmed they had done nothing but by his orders, it was highly just and necessary that he should expiate for those strong pre-

sumptions by some personal mortification. So saying, he, with an air of authority, commanded the soldier to shackle Motezuma, without suffering any reply; and, leaving him in that condition, gave orders to the guards to deprive him of all communication with his ministers.

Such was the astonishment of the Indian emperor, at seeing himself treated in this ignominious manner, that he could find neither power to resist, nor speech to complain, while his servants, without presuming to speak, threw themselves at his feet, with marks of inexpressible affliction, in order to bear the weight of his fetters. When he recovered from his first amazement, he broke out into a transport of rage, which, however, he soon repressed; and, tho' he believed his life was in danger, he collected his fortitude, and waited his fate with dignity and resignation.

Mean while Cortes, having taken all possible precautions to prevent any disturbance, ordered the Mexican general and his officers to be brought forth and executed, in presence of an innumerable concourse of people, who beheld this amazing spectacle with silent awe and admiration. Then returning to the emperor's apartment, he told him, with a cheerful countenance and courteous address, that the traitors, who had been so bold as to blemish his majesty's character, had now received condign punishment: and so saying, he himself stooped down, and with his own hands took off the fetters. Motezuma received his liberty with a tumultuous joy, and embraced Cortes two or three times with great affection; then they sat down together, and engaged in the most amicable conversation; during which, the Spanish general gave him

him to understand, that whenever he pleased he might return to his palace.

From this day Motezuma seemed to be perfectly well satisfied with his situation; he became courteous and liberal, and his servants and attendants rejoiced in this change of his disposition. At length, when he thought he had given indubitable proofs of his sincerity, he desired that Cortes would allow him to visit his temples, and, at the same time gave his royal word that he would punctually return to his quarters: and observed, that such an indulgence would redound to the advantage of the Spaniards themselves, as the Mexicans began to surmise that he was detained as a prisoner, and in that belief might raise some dangerous commotions. Cortes, sensible of the truth of what he alledged, assured him that he was at liberty to go abroad whenever he should think proper; yet he accepted of the promise he made with regard to his returning, because he should be extremely mortified in being deprived of his company.

Tho' the general would not hinder him from visiting his temples, he insisted upon his promise, that no human sacrifice should be performed from that day: and if these impious rites were not entirely abolished, they were at least conducted with such secrecy as screened them effectually from the observation of the Spaniards. His first excursion was to the principal temple, which he entered with his usual pomp and attendants, and his appearance was celebrated with the loud acclamations of his people, among whom he distributed largesses with uncommon liberality. Having paid his worship to the gods, he returned to the quarters, where he declared, with all the marks of sincerity, that exclusive of his promise, he would have come back solely

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boldly to enjoy that satisfaction he had in residing among the strangers.

In the midst of this success and seeming tranquillity, Hernan did not neglect those precautions which he deemed necessary for his own security, as well as for the execution of the vast designs he had conceived. He appointed Gonzalo de Sandoval to the government of Vera Cruz, which was vacant by the death of Juan de Escalante; but, as he did not chuse to part with such a valuable captain, he sent, in quality of his lieutenant, a private soldier, called Alonzo de Grado, a man of ability, who turbulent in his disposition, who had distinguished himself in the past disturbances.

This might have been a very unlucky step, had the vessels which Diego Velasquez fitted out in the prosecution of his old claim, arrived a little sooner on the coast of Vera Cruz. But, the lieutenant behaved with such insolence and tyranny, that, in a few days after his arrival, complaints were sent against him from the inhabitants and adjacent towns, so that Cortes was obliged to fetch him away prisoner, and indulge them with the governor in person.

The broken expressions which the Tlascalans had overheard, about cutting away the bridges, and ruining the causeways, had made a deep impression upon the mind of the general, and inspired him with the design of making himself master of the lake, by means of two brigantines to be built of the wrecks of the ships which had been bored.

Fraught with this idea, he excited the curiosity of Motozuma, by describing the nature of sailing by the wind, which was utterly unknown to the Mexicans, and obtained his permission to build two vessels on the lake for his majesty's amusement, and
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the instruction of his subjects. Accordingly the nails, cordage, canvas, and other tackle belonging to the Spanish ships were brought from Vera Cruz, and some builders, who had listed as soldiers, were set at work together with the carpenters of Mexico, who followed the direction of Cortes, and his artists; so that in a few days the brigantines were finished, and Motezuma resolved to embark in person with the Spaniards, that he might have the nearer view of this strange navigation. Great preparations were made for this exhibition.

A vast number of canoes, belonging to the emperor and others, were finely decorated and manned with the most expert rowers; and the Mexicans could not believe but that they should triumph in the trial; but no sooner did the breeze spring up, than the brigantines unfurled their sails, and began to move with such celerity, as soon left all the canoes at a great distance behind, to the inexpressible amazement of the Indians, who could not comprehend the European manner of steering and working such floating houses, but fairly owned this was an art beyond their capacity, and firmly believed, that by means of these wonderful machines, the christians could command the elements of wind and water. As for Motezuma, his astonishment was mingled with rapture, and he beheld the victory of the Spaniards with all the delight of a warm partizan, altho' it was obtained over his own subjects.

He became every day more and more attached to Cortes, who having gained this important point of the brigantines, took all the opportunities of forwarding the treaty of commerce and alliance which he had projected between Mexico and Spain, and informed himself, without incurring the least suspicion,

cion, of the extent, power, riches and produce of this Indian empire : nay, Motezuma himself took pains to make him acquainted with the nature and situation of his country : he ordered his painters to draw an exact representation of all his territories, together with all the bays, harbours and creeks upon the coast, and even permitted some Spaniards to go and examine the most celebrated mines, and take a more accurate survey of the country. The general's pretence for making those minute inquiries was, that he might be able to give his own sovereign a more adequate idea of the grandeur and power of his new ally ; and perhaps the Indian emperor gratified his desire from vanity and ostentation.

Notwithstanding the great progress the Spanish general had made in the favour of Motezuma, and esteem of the Mexicans, he was now exposed to a danger which had well nigh compleated his ruin. This was a conspiracy formed against him by the emperor's own nephew Cacumazin, king of Tezeuco, and first elector of the empire. He was a young man of great vivacity, art and ambition, who, under pretence of setting Motezuma at liberty, harboured designs upon the throne of Mexico, either by bringing about an immediate revolution, or by securing the popular favour at the next election when the throne should become vacant. With these views he took all private opportunities of depreciating the conduct, and displaying the pusillanimity of his uncle, who tamely submitted to the tyranny of a few insolent strangers ; and, at the same time, endeavoured to vilify Cortes and his Spaniards, as an handful of robbers, whose reputation was not built upon their courage and valour, but on the cowardice of those who were afraid to

oppose

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oppose their arms. He enlarged upon their presumption, in countenancing rebels and enemies, whom they had introduced into the bosom of their city, to the indelible reproach of the Mexican name; inveighed against the audacious behaviour of Cortes, who had acted as supreme magistrate in the midst of Mexico, and even put an Indian general to death by a most ignominious execution; and lastly, he reminded them of the shameful state of captivity in which they detained the emperor, to the eternal disgrace of all his nobles and people. By such insinuations he inflamed the minds of some of the first noblemen of the empire; and, at a private assembly, at which were present the kings of Cuyocan, Iztapalapa, Matalcingo, and many other powerful caciques, he explained their grievances in a pathetic harangue, and proposed that they should take arms and suddenly attack the Spaniards in their quarters. The king of Matalcingo, who was also Motezuma's nephew, and plainly perceived the drift of Cacumazin, which interfered with his own pretensions, opposed the execution of this scheme, until they should have first taken some steps to secure the emperor's person, which must be in the most imminent danger from such an attack; and, finding his expedient rejected by the assembly as an impracticable proposal, he is thought to have made Motezuma acquainted with the conspiracy, altho' he seemingly acted in concert with the council, which broke up after they had concerted the enterprize, appointed the day, and recommended to each other the most inviolable secrecy. This plot was no sooner intimated to Motezuma, than he went to communicate the particulars to Cortes, who, by means of his spies was already

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already informed of the whole. However, he thanked the emperor for this proof of his integrity and concern, and desired his permission to march out with his Spaniards, and chastise the seditious Cacumazin. Motézuma argued against this proposal, as a step which would not only discredit his authority, but also, in all likelihood, produce some new breach between the christians and his people: he therefore begged the general would leave the punishment of the delinquents to his care, and in a little time took such measures in private, that his rebellious nephew was seized at his town house, and brought prisoner to Mexico, where he was closely confined as a criminal under sentence of death. Yet he was not treated in this manner, until after he had publicly disobeyed the orders of his sovereign, and reviled Cortes in the most insolent and contemptuous manner. At this very period there was a brother of Cacumazin at Mexico, a youth of great courage and expectations, who had a few days before narrowly escaped a snare which his brother had laid for his life, in consequence of some domestic jealousies. Motézuma had taken this young prince into his protection, and even enrolled him in his own family; and Cortes taking the advantage of these circumstances, dissuaded the emperor from putting a prince of the blood to death by a public execution; but counselled him to deprive Cacumazin of his rank and dominion, and give them to his brother, who so well deserved that mark of his indulgence; by which means the treason would be sufficiently punished, and the kingdom of Tezcuco together with the dignity of first elector, devolve to the person who had the right of succession. of 214

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Moteczuma was highly pleased with his advice, which he immediately communicated to the nobles of his council, who applauded it as equally just and merciful; and, by a royal decree, Cacumazin was dispossessed of all his honours, dignities, and dominions, which were conferred upon his brother, to the satisfaction of all the grandees, and the unspeakable pleasure of the vassals of the family, with whom the young prince was a great favourite. When the emperor bestowed the investiture, with the ceremonies peculiar to the country, he made a pathetic speech to the young king, recommending to him the exercise of justice and benevolence, and in particular gave him to understand, that his good fortune was entirely owing to the advice of the Spanish general.

Although Moteczuma was pleased to see this storm blown over so quietly, disagreeable reflections continually disturbed his repose. He could not help remembering what he had been, and considering his present situation; and these sentiments filled him with grief and mortification. At last he summoned all his fortitude, and resolved to free himself of that odious restraint under which he had languished so long. Actuated by this motive, he took a proper opportunity to tell Cortes, that now he intended to make a voluntary acknowledgment of that vassalage which he owed to the king of Spain as successor of Quezalcoal, in a general assembly of his nobles; and, as a mark of that vassalage, settle a contribution, in which he himself would take the lead, by presenting the most valuable jewels of his treasury to Don Carlos.

Cortes, who did not perceive his whole aim, thanked him for his liberality, without seeming to be surprized at his proposal, and inwardly rejoiced

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at the prospect of being able to give his sovereign such important earnest of the wealth he should one day reap from this acquisition in point of superiority: for, he was now to be declared lord paramount of the Mexican empire; and Hernan, far from having any intention to depart, thought he could easily keep the footing he had obtained in Mexico, until he should receive orders from Spain.

Moteczuma entertained very different sentiments; he concluded, that Cortes could have no pretext for staying, after he should have obtained more than he could reasonably expect; and with that notion, dispatched couriers to convene all the caciques of his empire, according to the custom practised in all cases of emergency. They accordingly assembled with equal splendor and expedition, and the council was held in the king's apartments in presence of Cortes and his captains, together with their interpreters. Here Moteczuma uttered a studied harangue; wherein, after having reminded them of the obligations they owed him as their sovereign and benefactor, and assured them he had consulted and obtained the approbation of the gods, touching the cause of their meeting, he repeated the story and prophecy of Quezalcoal, declared the king of Spain was the descendant and successor of that mighty prince, consequently the rightful lord and proprietor of the Mexican empire, to whom he and all of them were bound in duty to yield obedience and acknowledgment; as a mark of which, he had selected the most precious jewels of his treasury, for an offering to the king of Spain, and he did not doubt that they would follow his example in dedicating some part of their riches to the same use.

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This discourse he did not pronounce without interruption. He could not help sighing from time to time, and when he owned himself vassal to another prince, the tears trickled down his cheeks, and he could not proceed; until Cortes rising, declared that it was not the intention of his sovereign to dispossess Motezuma, or make the least innovation in his government; but all he desired was, that they would settle his right to the succession in favour of his descendants. An explanation which encouraged Motezuma, who resumed his tranquillity, and distinctly finished his harangue. The assembly were astonished and confounded, at the proposal, which seemed so inconsistent with the dignity and known character of their emperor: they considered it as the effect of compulsion; they groaned bitterly, and gave other marks of anxiety and disturbance, and looked at each other in the most emphatic silence: until his prime minister, who knew his prince's disposition, took upon him to answer in the name of the rest; assuring him, that as all the nobles respected him as their natural lord and sovereign, they should readily obey whatever his majesty should think proper to propose, and follow his example in every thing to the utmost of their power. The whole council signified their assent to this declaration; and Cortes, by the mouth of his interpreter, made an artful speech, in which he gave thanks to Motezuma and all present, for this demonstration of their respect, which he accepted in the name of his king, without seeming to think it strange that they complied with their obligations: but, rather as one who receives a just debt, and is pleased with his debtor's punctuality.

Perhaps

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Perhaps Motezuma's whole aim in this transaction, was to forward the departure of his guests, without any intention to fulfil the terms of this submission for the future. Be this as it will, from that day Charles V. was acknowledged and believed by the people to be the lawful and hereditary lord of the Mexican empire; and their homage was authenticated by a public instrument, according to the custom of the country.

Motezuma having transacted this affair to his liking, resolved to lose no time in retrieving that liberty and independence, for which he had so long sighed in secret. He forthwith delivered to Cortes the present he had provided, consisting of curiosities in gold, in the shapes of animals, birds, and fishes, a great number of precious stones, particularly those called *Caleuites*, in colour like emeralds, which they esteemed above all others, together with some surprizing pictures made of variegated feathers: in a word, the whole was the ransom of a great prince, who thinks he cannot purchase his liberty at too high a price. The contribution of the nobles was answerable to the liberality of their monarch, and such as might be expected from wealthy chiefs, who vied with each other in loyalty and ostentation. Cortes appointed a receiver and treasurer, to take an exact account of what was delivered, and in a few days exclusive of jewels, precious stones, and pieces of curious workmanship, they had amassed as much gold as, when melted down, amounted to six hundred thousand pesos in bars of a very good alloy. Out of this treasure, one fifth part was set aside for the king, and one fifth of the remainder for the use of Hernan Cortes, and in order to defray the expenses of providing necessaries for the army. An-
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other part was likewise allotted to reimburse Diego Velasquez and Hernan's friends in the island of Cuba, who had supplied him with money for the voyage; and the rest was divided among the officers and soldiers, including those who were at Vera Cruz. Those in the same degree of rank had equal shares; but, among the private men, those were best rewarded, who had most distinguished themselves in the service. This difference produced murmurs and loud complaints, which, however, were soon silenced by the liberality of Cortes, who satisfied the malecontents from his own share of the contribution.

Motezuma having made this substantial acknowledgment of subjection, sent for Cortes, and with a peremptory air of unusual severity, told him, that now he was dispatched, he should think of departing, seeing his further stay would be justly attributed to sinister motives; nor could he any longer support him, when reason was not on his side. The nature of this intimation, and the manner in which he delivered it, was so unexpected, that it was not till after some pause that Cortes could recollect himself, so as to make a proper reply. He now, for the first time, perceived the drift of that assembly, which had been convoked; and suspecting that Motezuma might have some forces privately assembled in order to back this proposal which he had made in such a resolute and even menacing tone, he privately sent one of his captains to order his soldiers to take to their arms; and in the meantime excused himself for seeming embarrassed at seeing his majesty moved more than ordinary, assuring him, he was so far from intending to protract his departure, that he had come on purpose to
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beg his permission to build some vessels to transport the Spaniards to their own country, as he well knew they had lost the ships that brought them to the Indian coast.

The emperor is said to have provided fifty thousand men to support his determination; but, certain it is, he was desirous of avoiding a rupture with Cortes, and even very apprehensive of the answer he might receive: for, he no sooner heard this artful reply, which was equally sage and moderate, than he embraced him with particular marks of affection; and, being now rid of his fears, he told him with the utmost complacency, that it was not his intention to hasten his departure, before he was provided for the voyage; and that he should be furnished with every thing he wanted, without delay.

He accordingly issued orders for assembling all the carpenters of the country to cut wood, and work under the direction of Cortes and his people: and Hernan on his part, affected to comply with great alacrity. He dispatched his builders to Vera Cruz, in order to collect the iron-work, rigging, and sails of the vessels which had been sunk; but, at the same time, gave private directions to Martin Lopez, his master builder, to proceed slowly, and prolong the work as much as he could, without incurring the suspicion of the Mexicans: for, his real design was to maintain his footing at Mexico, until his commissaries should return from Spain, as he expected they would bring him a supply of troops, together with directions for his future conduct.

By these prudent measures, he quieted the minds of Motezuma and his subjects for the present; but

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in a few days he had occasion to exert all his discretion and magnanimity. Intelligence was brought to the Indian emperor, that eighteen ships were seen hovering upon the coast of Pilleca, and by the paintings, which were made for the better information of his majesty, and certain characters intermingled with the paintings, those ships were suspected to be manned with Spaniards; a circumstance that could not fail to alarm the whole empire, and revive that suspicion which Cortes had already incurred, and so lately dispelled. Motezuma immediately communicated his intelligence to the Spanish general, telling him that it would be unnecessary to proceed with his building, seeing he might embark in those ships for his own country: Hernan, having surveyed the paintings, was perfectly satisfied of their being Spanish vessels, and supposing they were come from Spain with a supply of troops and ammunition, answered with great composure, that he would embark immediately, provided those ships were bound back to any of the king of Spain's dominions: but, at the same time, observed that he would not desist from building, until he should be informed of the particulars, by a messenger from Zempoalla, whom he expected every moment.

Such a reasonable reply could not be disagreeable to Motezuma, who seems to have had a real esteem and veneration for Cortes, and to have dreaded nothing so much as a quarrel with the Spaniards: but, Hernan was not a little concerned, when in a few days he received a letter from Gonzalo de Sandoval, importing, that these ships belonged to Diego Velasquez, and contained eight hundred men, who were come to oppose him and his designs

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in Mexico. This mortifying account was put into his hands, while he was engaged in conversation with Motezuma, and it required all his prudence and resolution to conceal his emotions from the observation of that monarch. However, he succeeded in his endeavours, the emperor suspected nothing of the truth; Hernan even softened the account among his own people, and retired to his own apartment, in order to deliberate upon this unexpected event. But, here a retrospect is necessary, to explain the reception which the commissaries of Cortes found at the court of Spain, as well as the causes that prompted and enabled Velasquez to equip such an armament against him.

Alonzo Hernandez Portocarrero, and Francisco de Montejo, who sailed from Vera Cruz with letters for the king, together with the first tribute from New Spain, touched at the island of Cuba, tho' contrary to the orders they had received, that Francisco de Montejo might have the pleasure of seeing his own home, which was near the Havannah, at such a distance from the government of Velasquez, that he thought they ran no risque from his vigilance or resentment. This, however, was a very dangerous step, which had well nigh prevented their voyage to Spain: for Diego de Velasquez, apprehending that Cortes would send some of his ships to the island of St. Domingo, in order to solicit the succour and protection of the religious governors, had stationed spies all along the coast, to give him intelligence: and being, by these means, made acquainted with what happened at the habitation of Montejo, he immediately dispatched two light vessels well manned and armed, with orders to take the ship, and every person on board; and these

these orders were executed with such diligence, that the pilot Alaminos had occasion for all his skill and good fortune to escape the danger by which he was threatened: for, Montejo no sooner reembarked, in consequence of the first notice he received of the governor's design, than this bold mariner ventured to sail through the gulph of Florida, hitherto unattempted, which was the only expedient by which they could possibly elude the pursuit of Velasquez. After a prosperous voyage, they arrived at Sevil in October, tho' at a very unlucky conjuncture; for, the chaplain Benito Martin, whom Velasquez had sent to solicit the commission of king's lieutenant, had obtained his suit, and was now at Sevil, waiting for a vessel, in which he might return to Cuba, whither he had already sent the commission which he had procured. This man represented Cortes in such a disadvantageous light, as a pyrate who had clandestinely carried off the vessels belonging to Velasquez, and the interest of this last was so strong at Sevil, that the directors of the trade, in consequence of his complaint and impeachment, ordered the vessel and cargo to be seized, and, as a considerable favour, permitted the envoys of Cortes to resort to the king for redress. Accordingly, the two captains with Alaminos set out for Barcelona, where they expected to find the court; but, understanding his majesty was at Corunna, where he had prepared his navy to pass over into Flanders, in order to accept of the imperial crown, they took the road of Medellen, where they visited Martin Cortes, who received them with equal pleasure and surprize, when he understood the glory and success of his son, whose death he had long deplored; and they persuaded this venerable old gentleman to accompany them to the emperor, in hope that his character and grey hairs would give a sanction

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tion to their solicitations. It was their good fortune to overtake the court at Tordefillas, just as the presents from Cortes and the Indians of the new conquest arrived from Sevil; for, these the directors durst not detain, because they were upon the emperor's own account. They met with a very gracious reception from Charles, who expressed his satisfaction and astonishment at their account of this new discovered world, and, in several conferences with the deputies, minutely inquired into every particular of the conquest, while the Indians and presents before his eyes gave as it were a sanction and credit to the wonderful circumstances which they related. But, as his majesty was then on the brink of his departure for Germany, he referred the letters and solicitations of Cortes, to cardinal Adrian and the council, to which he had committed the administration of affairs during his own absence; desiring they would take some method for qualifying matters, so as to do justice to the pretensions of Velasquez, and at the same time encourage the conqueror of Mexico, who had hitherto proceeded with such uncommon spirit and success.

The president of this council was Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, bishop of Burgos, who greatly favoured Velasquez, and represented Cortes as a rebel and seditious person, upon whom they could have no dependance; however, they did not think it was convenient to give him immediate cause of discontent, nor would they send him any part of the supplies he so earnestly demanded; so that all his deputies obtained was a small share of the cargo they had brought for their subsistence, and they were obliged, for two whole years, to dance attendance at court, like unregarded projectors.

Mean while, Diego Velasquez received his commission

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mission of king's lieutenant, not only of Cuba, but likewise of all the lands which should be discovered and conquered through his means. This title, together with assurances of protection from the bishop of Burgos, president of the Indies, at once gratified his ambition and resentment; he resolved to appropriate to himself the glory of conquering Mexico, and to punish Cortes as a rebel and deserter. With these views, he exerted all his influence, and expended the greatest part of his fortune in equipping an armament, consisting of eight hundred Spanish infantry, eighty horse, twelve pieces of cannon, and great store of provision, arms and ammunition. The command of the expedition he bestowed upon Pamphilo de Narvaez, native of Valladolid, a man of distinction and capacity, but of a violent temper, vain, haughty, and bigotted to his own opinions: and this gentleman, with the title of Diego's lieutenant, had private instructions to do his utmost endeavours to apprehend Cortes, and send him over to Cuba in irons, together with his chief officers, provided they should refuse to abandon his interest; and to take possession, in the name of Velasquez, of all that had been conquered, because it was within his district, as the king's lieutenant.

The monks of St. Geronimo, sent the licentiate Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon, to dissuade Diego from his enterprize; and, in case other arguments should prove ineffectual, to command him to disarm his people, and desist from an undertaking which might disturb or impede the measures of Hernan Cortes.

This minister arrived in the island of Cuba, where he found the fleet well manned, and just ready to sail; and used all his influence and elocution to divert Velasquez from his purpose. He expatiated upon the danger to which his people might be ex-

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posed, in case Cortes should stand upon the defensive; he represented the mischief that might ensue to the interest of Spain, should the Indians perceive a civil war among their conquerors: and exhorted him to leave his complaints to the determination of the royal chamber.

Velasquez being deaf to all remonstrances, and elevated to a pitch of insolence and pride by the title which he had acquired, he proceeded to the judicial part of his commission, and caused his orders and protest to be notified by a scrivener. Although he was treated with contempt in the performance of his duty, he dissembled his resentment, and, pretending to be reconciled to a design he could not prevent, expressed a desire of accompanying the expedition, to gratify his own curiosity.

This request was immediately granted by Diego, and the licentiate embarked, in hope of being able to act as mediator between Narvaez and Hernan Cortes, and prevent the bad consequences of Diego's resentment. With the same view, Andres de Duero, that secretary of Velasquez who had befriended Cortes so much in the beginning of his fortune, likewise engaged in the expedition; and the fleet sailing with a favourable wind, soon anchored in the port of Ulua. Here Pamphilo de Narvaez sent ashore some soldiers for intelligence, and in a little time they returned with two or three Spaniards, whom they had found straggling about the place. From these he received information of every thing which had happened at Vera Cruz and Mexico.

In consequence of this intelligence, Pamphilo resolved to treat with Gonzalo de Sandoval about the surrendery of the fortress under his command, and forthwith sent a clergyman, attended by three soldiers and a notary, to signify his demand, and persuade

persuade Sandoval to join the army with his garrison. Gonzalo, who was prepared for their reception, recollected all his temper, which was scarce sufficient to restrain him within the bounds of moderation, when Guevara explained his message, and told him that Narvaez was come to send Cortes in chains to Cuba. He answered, with great warmth, he could not persuade himself, that Pamphilo de Narvaez, whom he believed to be a good subject, would attempt to interrupt Cortes in a conquest that would redound so much to the advantage of Spain, but rather join him with all his forces, to perfect such a noble scheme: however, if he was actually determined to offer violence to Hernan, he might be assured that the garrison of Vera Cruz would oppose him with all their power.

The priest, being equally astonished and incensed at this unexpected repulse, broke out into injurious language and threats against Hernan Cortes and his adherents, whom he upbraided as felons and traitors; commanding the notary to do his office, in publishing that all the Spaniards in Vera Cruz should pay obedience to Narvaez, on pain of death.

Sandoval having attempted in vain to persuade this indiscreet ecclesiastic, that such violence was equally unjust and unseemly in a person of his profession, assumed a peremptory air, and told the notary, he would cause him to be hanged immediately, should he presume to publish any orders that did not come from the king. Nay, he caused the priest and his attendants to be apprehended and sent to Cortes; whom he previously informed of the steps he had taken; then he summoned his Indian allies to his assistance, in case he should be attacked, put his fortress in order, and made all the necessary dispositions for sustaining an obstinate siege.

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Hernan Cortes did not receive the account of these transactions without concern. He was indeed agitated with the most violent emotions of anxiety, when he reflected upon the situation in which he stood between the Mexicans and Narvaez, who were equally his enemies; and, although he imparted his apprehensions to his own confidants, whose advice he always consulted, he wore an air of tranquillity, in presence of Motezuma, telling him, that those lately arrived were indeed vassals to the king his master, and had brought a second embassy to support the propositions he had already made; that they had brought an army along with them, according to the custom of their country; but, that he would dispose them to return, and even go along with them, seeing his majesty's generosity had left nothing for him or the new comers to desire.

Cortes resolved, if possible, to effect a reconciliation with Narvaez; but, in case he should prove refractory, he made provision for a rupture. He sent a message to his friends the Tlascalans, desiring they would assemble a body of six thousand men for an enterprize, in which he might possibly want their assistance; and he gave private instructions to three or four Spanish soldiers, who were permitted to visit the mines of Chinantla, to persuade the caciques of that country to levy two thousand soldiers for his service. At the same time, he purchased of them three hundred lances made of a very tough wood, and much longer than those used by his own people: these were armed with points of tempered copper, instead of iron, and distributed among his soldiers, as a safeguard from the horse of Narvaez, which gave him no small uneasiness. Mean while, Pedro de Solis arrived from Vera Cruz with the prisoners sent by Gonzalo de Sandoval; and Cortes, having been apprized of

of their coming, went out to receive them with more than ordinary attendance. He immediately ordered their fetters to be taken off, and embraced them with great hospitality, paying particular civilities to the licentiate Guevara, to whom he said, he would chastise Gonzalo de Sandoval for the little regard he had shewn to his person and dignity. Nay, he conducted him to his own apartment, complimented him with a place at his table, and intimated more than once the greatest satisfaction at the arrival of Narvaez, with whom he had formerly lived in the most intimate friendship. He made him a witness of the favours he received from Motezuma, and the profound respect with which he was treated by the Mexican princes: he presented him with some jewels of value, which greatly allayed the violence of his temper; his companions tasted largely of his bounty; and, without dropping the least hint of his being desirous that they would employ their good offices with Narvaez towards an accommodation, he in four days dispatched them, fully persuaded by his reasons and liberality, and warmly engaged in his interest.

Having dismissed them in this courteous manner, he sent Bartholome de Olmedo with letters for Narvaez, the licentiate Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon, and the secretary Andres de Duero; and this envoy was provided with jewels, which he had orders to distribute according to his own sagacity and penetration.

In his letter to Narvaez, he gave him an account of the conquest, described the warlike genius of the Indians, together with the power and grandeur of Motezuma; enlarged upon the bad consequences which would infallibly attend any misunderstanding among the Spaniards; reminded him of his duty to the king, and the friendship which had formerly subsisted between them; desired to know his orders,

which, if they were from his majesty, he would immediately obey, even tho' they should command him to resign his army, and desist from the enterprise in which he had so far succeeded. But, if he (Narvaez) acted only by virtue of a commission from Velasquez, he would do well to consider what mischief might accrue to the interests of his king and country, from prosecuting the unjust resentment of that governor, whom he was resolved not only to indemnify for the expence of equipping the fleet and armament with which he had arrived, but also to gratify with a share of the glory and advantage of his success: and, lastly, he gave Narvaez to understand, that he did not use arguments because he wanted strength; for, he knew as well how to maintain his own rights, as to propose an equitable accommodation.

Pamphilo de Narvaez had taken up his quarters in Zempoalla, where he was very hospitably received by the fat cacique, who at first believed he came in order to support and assist his friend Hernan Cortes: but he was soon undeceived, to his great mortification.

When the licentiate Guevara arrived from Mexico, and expiated upon the magnificence of that city, the kind reception he had met with from Cortes, the high degree of favour in which he stood with Moteczuma, and his eager desire of living in friendship with Narvaez, that imperious officer interrupted his discourse, by telling him, he might return to Cortes, by whose artifice he had been cajoled, and thrust him from his presence with shocking marks of rudeness and disrespect.

Tho' the priest was repulsed from this quarter, ie and his companions did not fail to make strong impressions upon the minds of the soldiers; among whom

whom they extolled the character of Cortes, in such a manner as not only disposed them to an accommodation with that general, but also inspired them with doubts and prepossessions to the prejudice of their own commander.

Guevara was soon followed by father Bartholome de Olmedo, who having delivered his credentials to Narvaez, could scarce prevail upon him to peruse the contents, which however he superficially glanced over, out of compliment to the person and function of the bearer. In vain did the friar make a very eloquent and pathetic remonstrance, importing the necessity of their acting in concert for the advantage of their country, the interest of which would be betrayed by their animosity. Narvaez replied with unseemly heat and precipitation, that the principal aim of that armament which he commanded was to chastise Cortes as a rebellious subject; that he would immediately set a price upon his head, and proclaim all his adherents traitors; and that he had sufficient force to wrest the conquest from his hands, without having any occasion to consult those who were the accomplices and abettors of his rebellion. The friar, still preserving his temper, exhorted him to consider well the step he was about to take; he gave him to understand, that, before he could arrive at Mexico, he would be obliged to fight his way through whole provinces of warlike Indians, who were the friends and confederates of Cortes; that Hernan's Spaniards were determined to die by his side, and that his cause would be supported by Motezuma, a prince so powerful that for every single soldier in the army of Narvaez, he was able to raise a numerous army.

Father Bartholome having taken his leave, with a promise of returning for a final answer, proceeded

to execute the other part of his commission. He visited the licentiate Lucas Vasquez, and the secretary Andres de Duero, who approved of what he had proposed to Narvaez, and promised to exert all their power and influence in effecting an accommodation. Then the father mingled with the captains and soldiers of his acquaintance, explained the nature of his embassy, represented the necessity of establishing peace between the two commanders, distributed the jewels and other curiosities with great judgment; and, in short, would have soon formed a strong party in favour of Cortes, had not his negotiation been prevented by Pamphilo de Narvaez, who, being informed of his proceedings, ordered him to be brought into his presence, called him a mutinous and seditious traitor, reviled him in the most injurious manner, and resolved to secure his person without delay. However, by the mediation of Andres de Duero, he was diverted from his purpose, and ordered the friar to depart immediately from Zempoalla.

The licentiate Lucas Vasquez being informed of what passed, came very seasonably, and proposed that before de Olmedo should be dismissed, the officers might be assembled, in order to deliberate upon a proper answer to Cortes, who seemed so well disposed to peace. Narvaez rejected the proposal with indignation and impatience; and in order to prevent any further altercation, that instant ordered war to be declared against Cortes, as a rebel and traitor to the king, assigned a considerable reward to any person who should take him dead or alive, and commanded the army to prepare for an immediate march.

The licentiate, incensed at this violence and irregularity, commanded the crier to desist, and by his

own

own authority forbad Narvaez to stir a foot from Zempoalla, on pain of death, or employ the forces without the unanimous consent of the whole army. Pamphilo, exasperated at this presumption, caused the licentiate to be apprehended in the most ignominious manner, and sent on board a vessel to be transported to Cuba, without delay. Bartholome de Olmedo returned to Mexico, without any favourable answer: but, the principal officers in the army of Narvaez were scandalized at his rage and insolence; the inferior soldiers became disaffected, and loudly murmured against his conduct; and in proportion to their hatred and contempt of their own general, the character and success of Cortes rose in their estimation. Nay, over and above these causes of dissatisfaction, they had other subject of disgust, in the avarice with which he hoarded up some presents, which were sent to him by Motezuma, who expressed his regard for the king of Spain, by his liberality to his officers.

Hernan Cortes found his fears real, by the account which he received from friar Bartholome, touching the violence and implacability of Narvaez; but, on the other hand, he was greatly comforted, when he understood the disposition of the new-come soldiers, and resolved to take immediate advantage of this favourable circumstance. Having communicated his sentiments to his officers, and maturely considered the inconveniencies which might happen on either side, he, with the approbation of his friends, determined to take the field, with his allies of Tlascala and Chinantla, and then marching towards Zempoalla, to halt in some confederate town, where they might be near at hand to treat of peace, and profit by the disaffection of the soldiers who came with Narvaez. The Spaniards of Mexico no sooner understood this resolution

resolution of their general, than they expressed their utmost zeal and impatience to be in action; for, notwithstanding the inequality of numbers, they had such confidence in his valour, ability and discretion, that they thought it almost impossible to miscarry under his command.

Hernan, immediately repaired to the apartment of Motezuma, in order to signify his intended march: but, he was not a little surprised when that prince anticipated his discourse, by telling him, he had from different parts received information, that the Spanish general residing at Zempoalla came with sinister designs against him and his followers; and that, tho' he did not wonder that the two chiefs should be enemies to each other from private animosity, he could not help believing, as they were vassals of one prince, and headed armies of contrary factions, that one of them must of necessity be a rebel to his sovereign.

Cortes immediately availed himself of that admirable presence of mind which never forsook him in emergencies, and answered, without hesitation, that the accounts which his majesty had received were undoubtedly true, and that he was come to lay the same intelligence before the emperor, as it was now authenticated by the return of de Olmedo: that, nevertheless, Narvaez was not to be considered as a rebel to his king, but rather as a person who proceeded upon wrong principles through mistake; for, he was come as lieutenant or substitute from a misinformed governor, who, residing in a remote province, was not acquainted with the last resolutions of the court of Spain, and really imagined that the embassy to the emperor of Mexico was an affair belonging to his office: but, that all this misunderstanding would vanish as soon as he (Cortes) could lay before that lieutenant his dispatches, by virtue of which he had
full

full power and jurisdiction over all the Spaniards who should arrive upon the Indian coasts. He had therefore resolved to direct his march immediately to Zempoalla with part of his forces, to dispose the new-comers to return on board their ships, and would soon make them sensible, that they are now to respect the subjects of the Mexican empire as a people under the protection of the king of Spain.

The emperor was very well pleased with the prospect of being delivered from such disagreeable visitants, to whose exactions and oppression he was no stranger: but, he looked upon the design of Cortes as a rash undertaking, in which he could not possibly succeed against such powerful odds; and therefore offered to furnish him with an army, which should be entirely at his devotion, and wholly under his command. This offer he repeated with such earnest marks of affectionate concern, that Cortes was fully convinced of his sincerity, tho' he declined the proposal with due acknowledgment, having no great confidence in the attachment of the Mexican soldiers.

Cortes, having taken further precautions, dispatched a courier to Gonzalo de Sandoval, with orders to leave the fortress of Vera Cruz to the care of the confederate Indians, and march out with his Spaniards to meet the general at a certain place of rendezvous. All the preparations being made for his departure, he went to take his leave of Moteczuma, to whose protection he recommended Pedro de Alvarado and the Spaniards he had left; and that prince exhorted him to defer coming to an open rupture with Narvaez, till the arrival of the Mexican succours, which he would not fail to send him in any number he should desire. He gave him his royal word, that he would not forsake Alvarado, nor
change

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change his habitation during his absence, and accompanied him a good way out of town with his whole retinue of courtiers.

The Spaniards marched with equal chearfulness and circumspection, like veterans inured to the hardships and stratagems of war, following the road to Cholula, where they were received with great hospitality. From thence they proceeded towards Tlascala; and, at the distance of half a league from that city, they found a splendid appearance of the nobility and whole senate; and their entrance was celebrated with demonstrations of joy and respect, suitable to the laurels they had won from the old inveterate enemies of the republic: nevertheless, they excused themselves from supplying Cortes with the auxiliaries he demanded. He accordingly admitted their excuse: and left their city without displeasure or complaint, and, afterwards had recourse to their assistance, which never failed him on the most critical occasions. After a short stay in Tlascala, he marched on to Matalequita, a town of Indian friends, about twelve leagues from Zempoalla, where he was joined by Gonzalo de Sandoval, and an addition of seven soldiers from the army of Narvaez. From these Cortes received information of every thing that had been transacted in the enemy's quarters before they deserted; and he had likewise intelligence of a fresher date, by means of two soldiers who had gone from Vera Cruz to Zempoalla in the disguise of Indians, carrying baskets of fruit, which they trucked with the Spaniards for glass beads and other toys. On this occasion they affected the simplicity of the natives with such dexterity, that they were allowed to range through every part of the quarters, and make their observations without suspicion: nay, they even ventured to repeat their visit; and, as a proof
of

of the careless watch that was kept by Narvaez, conveyed away from the very parade a horse belonging to captain Salvatierra, one of the bitterest enemies of Cortes.

In order to protract the time, until the Indians from Chinantla should arrive, Hernan sent father Bartholome a second time with proposals for an accommodation; and he making but small progress, the general dispatched Juan Velasquez de Leon, to use his influence with Narvaez, hoping that his relation to Diego de Velasquez would render his mediation more acceptable. Pamphilo had written to this officer, exhorting him to espouse the cause of his kinsman, and promising him a very advantageous post in his army; and Juan had delivered the letter to Cortes, with repeated protestations of dying by his side rather than desert his colours. This noble manner of proceeding won the confidence of his general, and was an additional motive for sending him upon this negotiation.

When he approached Zempoalla, Narvaez came forth with a grand retinue to receive him, on the supposition that he was come to fight under the banners of Diego Velasquez; and was not a little mortified to find himself mistaken: however, he used all the arguments his reflection could suggest, in order to detach him from Cortes, and commanded the whole army to be reviewed before him, that he might be an eye-witness of his superior strength. He next day invited him to dinner, together with those officers in whom he chiefly confided, that they might assist in persuading him to join their fortune; and, in the beginning of the conversation, he was treated with great civility and compliment: but, in the midst of their festivity, some sarcastic animadversions were uttered against Cortes; and, although his

his friend at first dissembled his resentment, that he might not prejudice the business in which he was employed, their expressions at last grew so indecent, that he could no longer restrain his indignation, but said aloud, with some warmth, that if any person in that company, who did not esteem Hernan Cortes, and all his followers, as good and loyal subjects to the king of Spain, would signify his sentiments before fewer witnesses, he would undeceive him in what manner he should chuse for his conviction. This declaration, which disconcerted Narvaez, was answered by a young officer of the name and family of Velasquez, who said, no man was worthy of bearing that name, who attempted to vindicate a traitor. Juan, incensed at this reproach, gave him the lie, and drew his sword in order to chastise this young man's insolence; and the company, who interposed, found it a very difficult task to prevent mischief. At length, however, he was prevailed upon to sheath his sword; and returned immediately to Cortes, breathing defiance and revenge.

His abrupt departure, and the cause of it, produced such dissatisfaction and murmurs among the officers and soldiers, that Narvaez, in order to quiet their clamour, was fain to appoint a person who should go to Cortes to apologize for what had happened to Juan de Velasquez, and learn the substance of his commission, which had not been fully explained. For this service he pitched upon the secretary Andres de Duero, who met Cortes on his march to an advantageous post nearer the enemy, which he meant to occupy until the arrival of the Chinantecas, and be at hand to act as occasion should require; for by this time all his hopes of accommodation had vanished. Duero and he embraced each other like two intimate friends, who meet after a long separation;

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tion; and all the officers received the stranger with demonstrations of joy and respect. Before they proceeded to business, Cortes presented him with some valuable jewels; he was regaled with great magnificence and hospitality, and staid till next day, conferring about measures to prevent a rupture, which would be so prejudicial to the interests of Spain. Cortes manifested the greatest temper and moderation, and even offered to relinquish the Mexican conquest to his competitor, while he and his followers should engage in some other expedition. Andres de Duero, struck with this instance of his modesty and self-denial, proposed an interview with Narvaez, not doubting that all their animosities would be surmounted by a personal conference: and Cortes immediately assenting to the proposal, the secretary returned to Zempoalla, where he likewise obtained the consent of Narvaez. The time was appointed and the place assigned, to which both parties agreed by a writing under their hands to come, accompanied by ten friends only, to witness the transactions of the conference. But, before the day of meeting, Cortes received private advice from Duero, that Narvaez had resolved to lay an ambush for his life; and this intelligence being confirmed by others who wished him well, he wrote a letter to Pamphilo, giving him to understand that he was no stranger to his treacherous design, renouncing all thoughts of accommodation, and remitting his satisfaction and revenge to the edge of the sword.

Having thus given vent to his indignation, he pursued his march, and took his station within a league of Zempoalla, his front being defended by the river of Canoas, and his rear supported by the neighbourhood of Vera Cruz. He posted some sentinels on the other side of the river, detached a number of
scouts

scouts to observe the country, and quartered his people in a number of cottages, where they were sheltered from the sun, and allowed to take their repose, until he should obtain further intelligence of the enemy's motions.

Narvaez was no sooner informed of this disposition, than he drew out his army into the field, ordered the war to be proclaimed at the head of his troops, and a reward of two thousand pieces of eight to be offered to any person who should bring him the head of Hernan Cortes: and, at the same time, he set a price upon the lives of Gonzalo de Sandoval, and Juan Velasquez de Leon. Then he marched about a quarter of a league to an open field, where he waited for Cortes, vainly imagining that experienced captain would forego the advantages of his situation, in order to engage an enemy who had three times the number of his men. Towards the close of the day, the weather, all of a sudden grew dark and cloudy, and such a prodigious quantity of rain descended, that the soldiers were instantly wet to the skin, their arms rendered useless, their footing unsure, they cursed the author of their expedition, and, with loud clamour, insisted upon returning immediately to their quarters. Narvaez was obliged to comply with their request, and never dreaming that Cortes would pass the river in such a night, he retreated to Zempoalla with great disorder and confusion. Nevertheless, as he intended to take the field again early in the morning, he would not allow his troops to separate, but lodged them in the principal temple of the city, furnished with three towers, and built upon an eminence, which they ascended by many ill-contrived steps, which rendered it very difficult of access. On the top of these he planted his artillery; he fixed his head-quarters in the middle tower, to
which

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which he retired with some officers, and about one hundred soldiers in whom he chiefly confided; the rest of the army was distributed in the other towers: some horse were sent out to patrol in the neighbourhood of the town, and sentinels being placed at the avenues, he went to rest without any farther concern.

Andres de Duero sent instantly one of the men in whom he confided, to apprise Cortes of their retreat, and the manner in which they were disposed; not with any view to encourage him to any immediate undertaking, but merely that he might pass the night in quiet, without any apprehension of being attacked in his quarters.

Hernan, however, no sooner received this information, than he resolved to take advantage of the favourable moment. He instantly revolved his scheme, which at once met with the approbation of his officers; he assembled his people without delay, notwithstanding the continuance of the tempest; and when they had passed the river, with the water above their middle, made a short speech, in which he informed them of the enemy's disorder, described the manner in which they were quartered in the temple, their carelessness and security, and explained the facility of attacking, and routing them in the dark, before they should have time to join, or be drawn up for their defence. This information he mingled with proper incentives, touching the insolence and treachery of Narvaez, as well as the justice of his own cause: so that his soldiers, being fired with resentment, called aloud to him to lead them forthwith to the enemy; and some of them protested openly, that if ever he should admit another thought of accommodation with Narvaez, they would on the instant withdraw their obedience.

He

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He formed them into three small battalions, the first of them was commanded by Gonzalo de Sandoval, the second was led by Christoval de Oled, and Cortes took the command of the rest in person. Gonzalo had orders to begin the attack by mounting the stairs, seizing the artillery, and cutting off the communication between the two lateral towers: Christoval was directed to assault the tower in which Narvaez lodged; and Cortes with his men resolved to second and support both attacks as occasion should require: he likewise gave orders, that, as soon as the action should begin, the drums should beat, and the trumpets with other warlike instruments sound, in order to increase the terror and confusion of the enemy. Father Bartholome, after a pious exhortation, gave them his benediction; the word was *el Spirito Santo*; and the most profound silence being recommended to them, the general began his march at a very slow pace, that they might not be fatigued before they came to action, and that the enemy might at their arrival be lulled in security and sleep.

He had not proceeded above half a league, when his scouts returned with a sentinel of Narvaez, whom they had surprized, tho' his companion had escaped among the bushes. In consequence of this accident, a consultation was held among the officers, who were of opinion, that they should hasten their march. They therefore left their horses, baggage, and other incumbrances by a little brook on the road-side: but, in spite of all the expedition they could use, the sentinel, arrived a few minutes before them, and gave the alarm, crying aloud, "The enemy is upon us." He was immediately carried before Narvaez, who slighted his intelligence, holding it impossible that Cortes would presume to attack him with such a small number of men, or even march in such a dark tempestuous night.

Mean

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Mean while Hernan reached Zempoalla without having been discovered by the enemy's cavalry, entered the town, and even came in sight of the temple, without finding any corps de garde, or being challenged by one sentinel, at the very time when the soldier affirmed to Narvaez, that he had seen the vanguard of Cortes and his whole army upon a hasty march. That self-sufficient officer still disbelieved his assertion, while his soldiers, who had taken to their arms, walked backwards and forwards in the porch, still dubious of the truth, tho' prepared in a good measure for whatever should happen.

Cortes soon perceived they had discovered him, and, as there was no time to lose, gave the signal for the attack; in consequence of which, Gonzalo de Sandoval began to mount the stairs, when the people belonging to the artillery who were upon guard fired two or three pieces, and by that alarm confirmed the truth of the soldier's report. The action began with great warmth; the dispute soon came to push of pike, and stroke of sword; and Gonzalo de Sandoval was very hard pressed in attempting to force his way against the disadvantage of the ground, and the superior number of the enemy: but it was not long before Christoval de Oled came to his relief; and Hernan Cortes quitting the rear, threw himself sword in hand into the hottest of the engagement. The enemy, in a few moments, began to give ground, abandoning the porch and artillery. Many fled to their quarters, while others repaired to the gate of the principal tower, where the dispute was renewed, and continued some time with great obstinacy.

Pamphilo de Narvaez, having put on his armour, exerted all his endeavours to rally his troops, and with great resolution rushed into the midst of the battle,

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battle, where his eye being thrust out with a pike, he fell to the ground, exclaiming, "I am a dead man." This accident completed the confusion of his soldiers, some of whom abandoned him shamefully, while others stood like statues, as if they had been thunderstruck, or fought with such disorder and despair, that they were easily routed, and their general taken prisoner.

Hernan, having silenced the shouts of his people, ordered the artillery to be turned against the towers, and a general pardon to be proclaimed for those who would surrender, offering advantageous conditions to such as would engage in his service; and liberty, with a free passage, to those who were desirous of returning to the island of Cuba. This prudent step, which he took in the first tumult of their fear, before they could discern the weakness of his force, or form any distinct plan of defence, was attended with all the success he could desire: for, no sooner were these terms proposed at the three towers, than both officers and soldiers came to surrender in whole companies, and laid their arms at the feet of Cortes, who received them with that generous urbanity which was peculiar to his disposition; tho' he took care to have them divided and properly guarded, until day should discover their different countenances and affections. After he had given these necessary directions, he went to visit Narvaez, who had been committed to the care of Gonzalo de Sandoval, and whose wound was already dressed; and that officer seeing him enter the apartment said, "Thank God, captain Cortes, for your good fortune in making me your prisoner." "Thanks be to God for all things, friend Narvaez, (replied Cortes) but, vanity apart, I look upon this victory amongst the least considerable actions which have been performed in this country."

Being

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Being informed that one of the towers, commanded by Salvatierra and Diego Velasquez the younger, made an obstinate defence, he ordered them to be summoned to surrender, and in case of refusal, threatened them with the utmost rigour of war: but they, disregarding his menaces, and declaring they would either hold out to the last, or have the benefit of a capitulation, he commanded two pieces of artillery to be planted against the tower; and, upon the first discharge, the defendants called for quarter, leaving the entrance open to Juan Velasquez de Leon, who entered with a small body, and seized Salvatierra and his namesake, who were the professed and inveterate enemies of Cortes. Thus the victory was completed in favour of Hernan, who lost but four lives in the action; whereas, a captain, an ensign, and fifteen private men of the enemy were killed on the spot, over and above the wounded, which amounted to a considerable number.

Narvaez and Salvatierra were sent under a guard to Vera Cruz, and young Diego remained prisoner with Juan de Velasquez, who treated him with great humanity, notwithstanding the former quarrel which had happened between them. At break of day the two thousand Chinantlans arrived; and tho' they came a little too late, Cortes was glad of their arrival, that his prisoners might see he was not destitute of friends. The vanquished were indeed overwhelmed with shame, when they perceived the small number of men by whom they had been totally defeated: they cursed the carelessness and insolence of Narvaez, and could not help admiring the valour and character of their conqueror, whose banners they became ambitious of following.

Thus, in a few hours, Cortes, by his admirable conduct, bravery, and vigilance, found himself at the

the head of above a thousand Spaniards; the only enemies who could give him disturbance, safe in his custody; a fleet of eleven ships and seven brigantines at his disposal; the last effort of Diego de Velasquez entirely frustrated, and his own strength reinforced in such a manner, as enabled him to prosecute his former scheme with a better prospect of success.

The horse of Narvaez, instead of engaging in the action, made their escape into the country, and being joined by the patrole, so as to make up a troop of forty, pretended to stand upon the defensive; but they were soon brought to reason, and enlisted with Cortes, after the example of their fellow-soldiers.

Then he dismissed the Chinantlans, and, during the few days that his army continued in quarters of refreshment, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages came to congratulate him upon his success, and renew their protestations of obedience.

Cortes however could not be easy in his mind, while he reflected upon the situation of Pedro d'Alvarado, encompassed with enemies, and at the mercy of a barbarous prince, who might be persuaded by motives of interest, to sacrifice his honour to the advantage of his empire. He, therefore, resolved to return immediately to Mexico, and that Motezuma or his people might not take umbrage, at seeing him come back with such a numerous body of men, he determined to divide his army, and employ part of his troops in other conquests.

With this view he ordered Juan Velasquez de Leon, with two hundred men, to go and pacify some disturbances in the province of Panuco; Diego de Ordaz was to be sent with the same number to settle the country of Guazacisbalco; so that he himself would have had little more than six hundred Spaniards, who would have been sufficient to dignify his

his return to Mexico, without arousing the jealousy of the Indians. But this disposition he was obliged to change, in consequence of a letter from Alvarado, who gave him to understand, that in spite of Motezuma, who had never once offered to leave the quarters, the Mexicans had taken up arms against him, and repeated their attacks with such obstinacy, that unless they were immediately succoured, he and all his men must inevitably perish. The soldier who brought this letter, was accompanied by an ambassador from Motezuma, who pressed Cortes to return with all possible expedition.

Rodrigo Rangel, a man of approved fidelity, was appointed deputy-governor of Vera Cruz; a garrison was left at Zempoalla, with a sufficient number of men for the security of the vessels; and the army being mustered after these deductions, amounted to one thousand foot, and one hundred horse. Before his departure, Cortes sent an answer to Pedro de Alvarado, and another to Motezuma, giving an account of his victory, and assuring them that he would immediately come to their assistance. Accordingly he began his march, the army taking different routes, that they might, as little as possible, incommode the country through which they passed, and be the more easily supplied with provision; and a place of rendezvous was appointed near Tlascala, where they joined, after having sustained much hardship and fatigue; for they had marched with extraordinary diligence. On the 17th day of June he entered Tlascala, with all his troops in good order, and was received with great joy and affection by those faithful allies, who confirmed the account he had received of Alvarado's situation, and dwelt upon some particulars which they exaggerated, on purpose to incense him against the Mexicans, whom they de-

tested: nay, in order to complete his vengeance upon those people, whom they wished to see extirpated, the senate proposed to assemble all the troops of the republic for his service; but, as he had no intention to act as minister of their implacable enmity, he declined the offer, and contented himself with a body of two thousand, which in all probability he accepted, that he might not seem to slight their alliance.

Without having met with any sinister incident upon the road, he arrived at Mexico on St. John's day, and passed the lake without the least opposition, tho' he perceived many marks of hostile fury: such as the two Spanish brigantines flayed to pieces and half-burnt; the suburbs and barrier abandoned, the bridges, that served for the communication of the streets, broken down; with all which a profound silence prevailed over the city. In consequence of these suspicious symptoms, the infantry were ordered to slacken their pace, and the cavalry to go before and reconnoitre, until the Spaniards in Mexico discovering the army, raised a great shout, and dissipated their apprehensions. Pedro de Alvarado came down with his people, and received them at the gate of the quarters, where the soldiers and officers embraced each other with the sincerest marks of pleasure and affection; and Motezuma went as far as the outward court to meet Cortes, whom he caressed in a transport of joy, which could not possibly be the effect of dissimulation.

Hernan retired with Pedro de Alvarado, to inquire into the cause of that sedition among the Mexicans, by which he had been so much endangered. That officer gave him to understand, that soon after his departure from Mexico, the nobles had behaved with less respect and complaisance than usual;

usual; that from the information of a trusty spy he learned the people were contriving something extraordinary, because they frequently assembled in private; that upon redoubling his diligence, he obtained certain intelligence, that a conspiracy was hatched against the Spaniards, and their intention was to assemble the inhabitants, on pretence of celebrating annual dances called Mitates; on which occasion, the nobles would harangue the multitude, and proceed immediately to the Spanish quarters, in order to extirpate those insolent strangers who kept their monarch prisoner, and treated even their gods with outrage and contempt. On the morning that preceded the appointed day, some of the chief promoters of this sedition came to ask Alvarado's permission to celebrate their festival; but, that very night, he understood, they were busily employed in concealing a considerable quantity of arms in houses near the temple. Then all his doubts vanished, and he resolved to anticipate the execution of their scheme, by assaulting them before they should have time to take arms or raise the populace. He accordingly went forth, accompanied by fifty of his men, on pretence of seeing the diversion, and finding them intoxicated with liquor and excess of joy, he attacked and dispersed them without opposition; a good number was killed and wounded in their flight, and these being stripped of their jewels and ornaments by the Spaniards, Alvarado retired without making the people acquainted with the motives of his indignation; so that they imputed the assault to his avarice alone, and the slaughter and pillage of their nobility before their eyes incensed them to such a degree, that they presently ran to arms, and, in a twinkling, a very formidable insurrection ensued. They had made several attacks upon the quarters,

and even killed three or four Spaniards ; by which exploits, their courage and presumption soared so high, that, far from fearing the resentment of Cortes with his increased army, they had retreated to another part of the town, and left the entrance free, that, after all the Spaniards should be united in one body, that they might surround and destroy them at once.

Hernan severely reprehended Alvarado for his rashness and want of consideration, in leaving the quarters, and hazarding himself and his people, when the city was in such commotion ; and above all, for his having concealed from Motezuma the first intelligence he had received : he likewise blamed him for his inadvertency, in retiring without having explained to the populace the cause of such a violent assault ; and Alvarado was so well convinced of his own indiscretion, that he desired he might be imprisoned, with a view to appease their clamours, and facilitate the reduction of the enraged multitude.

They attempted nothing that whole night, and the same mysterious silence prevailing next morning, Cortes ordered Diego de Ordaz, at the head of four hundred Spanish and Tlascalan soldiers, to reconnoitre the principal streets, and, if possible, dive into their designs. He had not proceeded far, when he discovered a body of armed men, detached on purpose to decoy and draw him on ; and having advanced a good way, in order to take some prisoners, he was all at once opposed by an innumerable multitude, who marched boldly up to his front ; another army, which had been concealed in the cross streets, attacked him in the rear, and all the terraces and windows on each side, were filled with armed men, who showered upon them an infinite quantity of stones and missile weapons.

Diego

Diego de Ordaz, finding his retreat cut off, in such a manner that he could not apprize Cortes of his danger, formed a second front with his rear, and ordered his men to employ their pikes and swords against the torrents of enemies below, while his fire-arms were plyed against those above. The heat of the engagement was not of long continuance; for, tho' the Indians advanced with great fury and resolution, their attacks were carried on in such a tumultuous manner, that confusion and disorder immediately ensued, and they soon retired to a distance, where they could neither offend nor be offended. The windows and terraces being quickly cleared by the fire-arms, Diego de Ordaz thought it was time to retreat, tho' he was beset in such a manner as obliged him to cut his way sword in hand, and, before he could reach the quarters, he and the greatest part of his men were wounded, and seven soldiers left dead upon the spot.

Cortes found by this experiment, that it was now no time to negotiate, and resolved to make a general sally with the greatest part of his forces, in order to compel them, by dint of hostilities, to sue for an accommodation: for, Motezuma was diffident of his own authority, nor had the insurrection any leader of influence, with whom he could enter into a treaty.

Mean while, the Mexicans looking upon the retreat of Diego de Ordaz as a flight, followed him with inconceivable fury and resolution, until the artillery from the quarters made a terrible slaughter; in consequence of which they fell back, tho' they halted in fight, in order to form a new plan, that they might return to the attack with redoubled vigour. All the streets were immediately filled with armed men; their drums and shells sounded the signal

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nal for the assault; and they advanced again with great impetuosity, their vanguard being composed of archers to clear the walls, that the rest of the army might approach: and indeed, their discharges were so thick, that the quarters were almost filled with arrows; and the Spaniards obliged to employ a number of hands to remove them, otherwise they would have blocked up the way to the ramparts. While the archers were thus employed, the rest rushed in like a flood, notwithstanding the terrible havoc which the cannon and small arms made among them; they even advanced to the very gates, which they endeavoured to demolish with their flinted instruments; some leaped upon the shoulders of their companions, and others made ladders of their lances and pikes, in order to scale the walls or the windows; as one sett were wounded and fell, others supplied their places, trampling upon the bodies of their friends and countrymen, as if they had been strangers to fear or compassion; and, in a word, they fought like savage beasts of prey, when maddened by famine and revenge. Nevertheless, they were at length repulsed, and retired to the cross-streets for cover till the approach of night, when they raised another terrible alarm, by shooting fire-arrows into the quarters, so as to produce a dreadful conflagration in different parts of the building, which obliged the Spaniards to break down walls, in order to prevent the communication of the flames, and afterwards toil, during the greatest part of night, in repairing the breaches they had made, that they might be in a proper posture of defence.

In the morning, the enemy appeared at a distance, seemingly afraid of advancing within cannon-shot, and provoked the Spaniards with injurious reproaches,

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proaches, to come forth to battle. Cortes, who had been resolved to make a sally, took the opportunity of this provocation, to inflame the minds of his soldiers with a short speech, exhorting them to revenge, and finding them impatient of delay, formed his whole force into three battalions, two of which were ordered to clear the cross-streets, while he himself, at the head of the third, should take the street of Tacuba, where the greatest body of the enemy was posted; and as he laid his account with being attacked in front and rear at the same time, he formed a double front in each division, according to the method formed by Diego de Ordaz in his retreat.

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